



2 Arab Media Forum stresses need to combat fake news



22 Online myth busters fight tide of fake news in India



29 Afghan girl spends life as 'son' her parents wanted



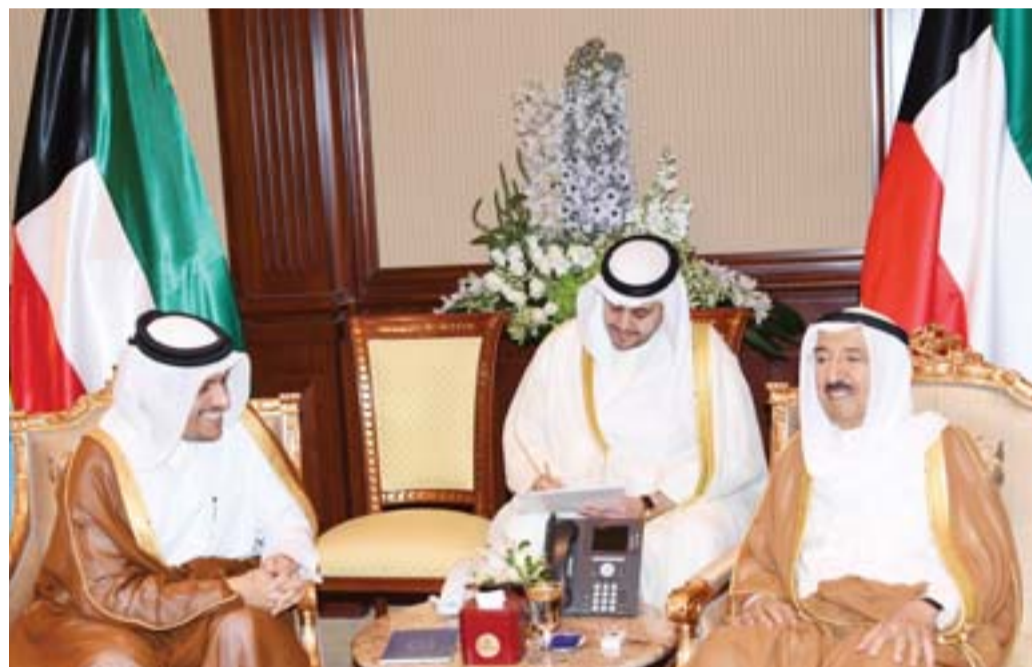
12 India tennis star Mirza announces pregnancy



Kuwait vows response amid diplomatic row with Manila

Third suspect arrested • MPs keep up pressure • Lawyer files case against embassy

Amir receives letter from Qatari leader



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Thani at Bayan Palace yesterday, who handed the Amir a written letter from Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. The letter focused on ways to boost ties and touched on recent regional developments. — KUNA

By A Saleh, Meshaal Al-Enezi and Agencies

KUWAIT: Kuwait has taken effective measures in response to "incendiary remarks" made by the Filipino ambassador to the state, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday. Kuwait has taken umbrage at the Filipino envoy's comments as well as "questionable conduct" on the part of Manila's diplomatic staff in the country, the foreign minister told the Cabinet in its weekly meeting. He stressed that the actions have been deemed a threat to Kuwait's sovereignty, a country that prides itself on its immaculate human rights record.

Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah informed the executive body that the interior ministry has taken action in this regard as well. Kuwait had summoned the Philippines' ambassador twice last week in protest over "inflammatory comments" he made to a local newspaper. Relations between Kuwait and the Philippines have been tense since the body of a Filipina worker was found in a freezer in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti authorities have identified and arrested three Filipino suspects who are believed to have helped a Filipina housemaid to escape from her sponsor's home. One of the suspects was arrested yesterday, the interior ministry said. Two cars, seen in a viral video showing some people helping Filipino domestic helpers escape from their employers' households, have also been seized in a crackdown, the ministry said in a press statement. The suspect admitted that he had urged Filipino domestic workers to quit their work, it added. Two other Filipinos were arrested on Sunday.

Informed sources predicted that MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaiei will file a grilling motion against FM Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled unless serious measures are taken against the

Philippine Embassy. The sources expected the motion to be filed after the next parliamentary session. MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei also called for measures to be taken against the Philippines, starting by recalling Kuwait's ambassador in Manila and all embassy staff, in addition to gradual measures against the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait, declaring the ambassador persona non grata and expelling diplomatic staff.

Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah said Kuwait is dealing with the undiplomatic statements and actions of the Philippine Embassy according to gradual measures that will accelerate according to the violations committed against Kuwaiti laws and sovereignty, "which are unacceptable". Jarallah said the foreign ministry had given the embassy a three-day grace period to hand over the suspects involved in helping the maids escape to avoid forcing the ambassador to leave.

"Manila's and the ambassador's persistence on using such statements unfortunately makes us go further on taking measures to face the situation," he said, noting that when summoned to the ministry, the ambassador said his statements had been misunderstood. Jarallah denied that the foreign ministry discussed severing diplomatic relations. "We only stressed that Kuwait will take measures to protect its sovereignty, which is a red line," he said, adding that a Kuwaiti delegation had been sent to the Philippines to discuss a labor agreement.

Separately, a Kuwaiti lawyer yesterday filed a case against members of the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait, accusing them of violating Kuwait's penal law as well as the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The lawyer also filed another case at the administrative court demanding mandating the foreign minister to take proper measures against the ambassador and consider him persona non grata in Kuwait.

News in brief

Trump keen to resolve Gulf crisis

KUWAIT: US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman said yesterday President Donald Trump is keen on finding a "quick and final" solution for the Gulf crisis. There have been contacts between US and Gulf officials over the crisis, Silverman told KUNA, affirming the "unity" of the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries was "important" amidst huge security challenges. The US administration has voiced backing of Kuwait's mediation to resolve the Gulf crisis. — KUNA

Houthi political chief 'killed'

SANAA: Yemen's Houthi rebels yesterday accused the Saudi-led coalition of killing their political leader Saleh Al-Sammad in an air strike last week. Sammad, head of the Houthis' supreme political council, was "martyred" in the eastern province of Hodeida on Thursday, the Iran-allied rebels said in a statement published via their Saba news agency. Meanwhile, the Houthis fired two ballistic missiles at a Saudi Aramco facility in the southern city of Jizan yesterday, but Saudi state media said both projectiles were destroyed. — Agencies

UAE to rebuild Nuri Mosque

BAGHDAD: The United Arab Emirates plans to rebuild the Grand Al-Nuri Mosque, the historic landmark of the northern Iraqi city of Mosul which was blown up by Islamic State last year, the Dubai government said on its Twitter account yesterday. The militants blew up the mosque in the final weeks of the US-backed Iraqi campaign that dislodged them from Mosul, which was their de-facto capital in Iraq. — Reuters

Body of Iran shah possibly found

TEHRAN: Tehran's heritage committee said yesterday it has found a mummified body at the site of a former shah's tomb during expansion work on an Islamic shrine, raising a storm of interest over whether the long-lost corpse has been rediscovered. After the 1979 revolution, the newly installed Islamic authorities did their best to erase any memories of the Pahlavi monarchy they had overthrown. This included destroying the enormous tomb in south Tehran of Reza Shah Pahlavi, the military strongman who seized control of the country in the 1920s and abdicated in favor of his son in 1941 under pressure from the British.

Panel rejects amendments to penal code

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly's legal and legislative committee yesterday rejected proposed amendments to the penal code because they suggest a jail term and hefty fines. Head of the panel MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaiei said the amendments restrict freedoms and propose huge fines, besides stipulating jail terms for online vio-

lators. But liberal MP Abdulwahab Al-Babtain, one of five lawmakers who submitted the amendments, denied that they included any harsh penalties for those who express their opinions.

He criticized the committee for not inviting any of the lawmakers who proposed the amendments to hear their opinions. The lawmaker however said that they are ready to withdraw the amendments if they include any restrictions on the freedom of speech, adding that they will never propose restrictions against MPs or activists.

Meanwhile, MP Riyadh Al-Adasani said yesterday that the National Assembly has opened the file of the Kuwait-based Olympic Council of Asia, which is accused

of corruption, and warned that many more files will be exposed. He said the issue is on its way to the public prosecution, adding that a number of issues will be raised. The Assembly last week debated the issue of the OCA, and several lawmakers made corruption allegations against the continental sports organization that has been based in Kuwait since its establishment over 30 years ago.

MPs also raised the issue of the Olympia Mall, where the OCA is located. The lawmakers called on the government to seize the mall because of many violations. The government informed them that the issues related to OCA have been sent to the public prosecution for a probe, and that the finance ministry is revising the

contract of Olympia. Adasani also said MPs involved in any graft suspicions should be investigated like government officials.

Separately, the court of appeals yesterday sentenced 14 opposition activists to two-year suspended terms for repeating publicly parts of a controversial speech by former opposition MP Musallam Al-Barrak, for which he was jailed for two years. The court suspended the implementation of the jail term for three years and asked each of the defendants to pay KD 2,000 and maintain good conduct throughout the three years. MPs Jamaan Al-Harbash and Nayef Al-Merdas were not tried because they have parliamentary immunity.



LONDON: Britain's Prince William and his wife Catherine show their newborn son, their third child, to the media outside the Lindo Wing at St Mary's Hospital yesterday. — AFP

Will and Kate return home with baby boy

LONDON: Britain's Prince William accompanied his wife Kate as she left hospital yesterday evening after giving birth to a baby boy, the couple's third child who is fifth in line to the British throne. The boy, weighing eight pounds and seven ounces (3.8 kg), was born at 11:01 am (1001 GMT) with William, the Duke of Cambridge, present for the birth. Kensington Palace announced. "The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and their son will travel home to Kensington Palace," it said. "Their Royal

Highnesses would like to thank all staff at the hospital for the care and treatment they have received. "They would also like to thank everyone for their warm wishes," the palace added in a statement.

The couple stepped out of St Mary's Hospital in central London around 6:00 pm to cheers from a crowd of supporters and global media outlets gathered outside. Their two other children - Prince George, aged four, and two-year-old Princess Charlotte - had met the latest addition to the family earlier in the afternoon, before returning home to Kensington Palace ahead of their parents. Charlotte gave a wave to the assembled well-wishers and media as she entered the hospital after William had collected the siblings from school.

Continued on Page 11

Celebrations as veteran Armenia leader resigns

YEREVAN: Armenia's veteran leader Serzh Sarkisian resigned after mass protests against his election as prime minister with sweeping powers, sparking celebrations across the impoverished country. Last week Sarkisian was elected prime minister by lawmakers after serving a decade as president, triggering political turmoil in the Moscow-allied nation of 2.9 million people. The opposi-

tion said the move was designed to extend his chokehold on power under a new parliamentary system of government. Tens of thousands of protesters took to the streets of the capital Yerevan in recent days.

The 63-year-old Sarkisian - who earlier refused to step down - stunned the country yesterday by saying he was in the wrong and resigning. His announcement came shortly after the release of protest leader Pashinyan who had been detained by police on Sunday.

Continued on Page 11



YEREVAN: People celebrate Armenian Prime Minister Serzh Sarkisian's resignation in downtown Yerevan yesterday. — AFP



Serzh Sarkisian

Amir receives Information minister, Arab media officials

Premier hosts Info minister, Arab Media Forum members



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, accompanied by members of the 15th Arab Media Forum.—KUNA photos



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri and members of the Arab Media Forum.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs

Mohammad Al-Jabri who was accompanied by members of the 15th Arab Media Forum. Amiri Diwan Minister Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah attended the meeting. Later yesterday, His

Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Jabri who presented to His Highness members of the Arab Media Forum on the occasion of holding

the forum 15th session in the State of Kuwait. Sheikha Ltimad Khaled Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Chair of His Highness the Prime Minister Diwan, attended the meeting.—KUNA



KUWAIT: (From left) Secretary-General of the Arab Media Forum Madhi Al-Khamees, Information Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah attend the 15th Arab Media Forum.— Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Forum stresses need to fight fake news

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the 15th Arab Media Forum kicked off yesterday at Regency Hotel. Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri said Kuwait is keen to support the forum, which started as a Kuwaiti initiative to develop and embrace workers in various media fields.

Jabri said traditional and new media are taking a path to reach Arab societal thought, especially youth, pointing out that the Arab Media Forum chose in this year's session an important issue, which is the news industry, its multiplicity of sources and its credibility. He noted that it is necessary to stand against the spread of fake news that affect young people, stressing the importance of the values of credibility and transparency that put the national interest above all considerations.

Jabri expressed his pleasure that the United Arab Emirates is represented by the emirate of Sharjah as the guest of honor of the Arab Media Forum, because Sharjah has a great impact in supporting Arab culture. "The emirate of Sharjah has become a special cultural oasis led by the Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi, who highly values all his positions in various fields, both towards Kuwait and Arabism

as a whole," he said.

Social networks

Assistant Secretary General for Media Affairs at the Arab League Haifa Abu Ghazaleh said media are very important at present as their development coincided with the development of societies as well as technological progress, indicating that this development caused a kind of chaos and a huge amount of information flow. She said difficulty in the ability to verify news on social networks has increased the spread of inaccurate news and misinformation, pointing out that this has become a challenge facing various media.

Abu Ghazaleh said the task of media in the era of information flow is difficult and requires serious work to deal with misleading news and the threat posed to the Arab society to absorb and interact with the changes taking place in the world. Abu Ghazaleh stressed that the forum is being held during very complex circumstances, especially with the announcement by US President Donald Trump declaring Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, noting that the support of the Palestinian cause is a "sacred duty." The Arab League has developed an international media plan to address the US decision on Jerusalem, she added.

Secretary-General of the Arab Media Forum Madhi Al-Khamees said the forum has been held for about 15 years. "It was inevitable to continue this work and keep the faith of the political leadership in Kuwait to sponsor and support this forum to be held year after year. We have had great support for many years by His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, the former prime minister," he said. "We are keen to see this forum succeed, and remember that this cannot happen without the support of Kuwait."

Youth Affairs' Undersecretary Sheikha Al-Zain Saud Al-Sabah. The two sides discussed issues of common concern, according to a statement by the Ministry of Defense. Later, Sheikh Nasser met separately with ambassadors of Georgia, Romania, Canada, the Netherlands and South Korea, discussing issues of joint interest, regional and international topics. Defense Ministry's Undersecretary Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah attended the meetings.—KUNA

Zain strategic partner of 15th Arab Media Forum

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its participation in the inauguration ceremony of the 15th edition of the Arab Media Forum under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the attendance of his representative the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri, and Forum Director Madhi Al-Khamees.

Zain has been the strategic partner of the Arab Media Forum during the past seven consecutive years, as the company is keen on enriching its media involvement, being a leading private sector company in the country. Zain believes in the strong impact media has on individuals and communities, and it strives to reach out to all of the different segments of the society through this very vital tool.

The Arab Media Forum has proven itself to be one of the region's most prominent events that attend to Arab media. Since 2003, the event brought together many ministers, editors-in-chief of local and regional newspapers, media executives, journalists, academics, authors, actors, businessmen, and social figures from all around the Arab world.

The 15th edition of the forum witnessed a number of seminars, workshops, and discussion panels related to media, featuring many of the event's most prominent attendees with the presence of distinguished media personalities who were specially invited from all around the Arab World.

Zain also participated in the forum through its dedicated booth, where the company welcomed visitors to discuss the various ways in



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri visit Zain's booth.



Undersecretary of the Information Ministry Tareq Al-Mizrim visits Zain's booth.

which different communications mediums can enhance the development of current media tools in the Arab region. The company also highlighted the big role social media plays nowadays in communities all around the world.

Zain's strategic partnership of this forum highlights its social commitment, as the company believes in the importance of the role press and media plays in the development of communities. Zain will continue supporting

this very important sector which carries significant and informative messaging to the public at large and the communications world as a whole.

The Arab Media Forum was founded in Kuwait in 2003 with the aim of developing Arab media. The forum holds a number of events and activities throughout the Arab world, and features the participation of Information Ministers, media personalities, public and private media bodies, and more.

EQUATE, KFSD, MOI organize safety training

KUWAIT: EQUATE Petrochemical Company, a global producer of petrochemicals, Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) organized a joint training program to strengthen relations and adopt global best practices in addressing emergencies.

EQUATE's Emergency Services and Security Leader Abdulqader Al-Qabandi, said: "We are committed to developing our employees' skills on various and diverse levels. Constantly organizing and participating in fire safety training courses and workshops to keep everyone up-to-date and safe are things that we take very seriously due to the varying environments of our jobs. EQUATE pays great attention to sharing knowledge and expertise to ensure overall development and sustainability."

The partnership between EQUATE, KFSD and MOI has been growing over the past few years through a number of partnerships. This initiative comes as part of a memorandum of understanding that was signed in 2016 to support efforts in relevant fields. The recent training programs, which included a total of over 20 employees from the three organizations, were conducted over the course of two weeks by experts in municipal firefighting and fire investigation at KFSD's facilities, then followed by two-weeks of training on vital industrial security at MOI's training center.



Defense minister meets official, envoys

KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah met yesterday at Bayan Palace with the Ministry of

قناة



غضب تحبها

www.sbc.sa

مستقبلنا وصل

Local

Migrant workers in Kuwait remain vulnerable to abuse: HRW Report

World Report 2018 highlights events of 2017 in Kuwait

NEW YORK: In January 2017, Kuwait carried out its first executions since 2013, hanging seven people. Despite recent reforms, migrant workers do not have adequate legal protections, and remain vulnerable to abuse, forced labor, and deportation for minor infractions.

In October, Kuwait's Constitutional Court found that an overbroad 2015 law that required all Kuwaiti citizens and residents to provide DNA samples to authorities violated the right to privacy. Provisions in Kuwait's constitution, the national security law, and other legislation continue to restrict free speech, and were again used in 2017 to prosecute dissidents and stifle political dissent.

Kuwait continues to exclude thousands of stateless people, known as Bedoon, from full citizenship despite their longstanding roots in Kuwaiti territory. In 2017, Kuwait reportedly deported 76 men on suspicion of being gay. Unlike many of its Gulf neighbors, Kuwait continued to allow Human Rights Watch access to the country and engaged in constructive dialogue with the organization on a range of human rights issues.

Migrant workers

Two-thirds of Kuwait's population is comprised of migrant workers, who remain vulnerable to abuse despite recent reforms. In 2015, Kuwait issued a new standard contract for migrant workers, and a 2016 administrative decision allowed some migrant workers to transfer their sponsorship to a new employer after three years of work, without their employer's consent. However, these reforms do not include migrant domestic workers.

In 2015, the National Assembly passed a law granting domestic workers the right to a weekly day off, 30 days of annual paid leave, a 12-hour working day with rest, and an end-of-service benefit of one month a year at the end of the contract, among other rights. In 2016 and 2017, the Interior Ministry passed implementing regulations for the law, and mandated that employers must pay overtime compensation. The ministry also issued a decree establishing a minimum wage of KD60 (\$200) for domestic workers.



Protections for domestic workers are still weaker than those in Kuwait's labor law. The domestic worker law also falls short by failing to set out enforcement mechanisms, such as inspections of working conditions in households. The law also does not set out sanctions against employers who confiscate passports or fail to provide adequate housing, food, and medical expenses, work breaks, or weekly rest days.

Migrant workers remain vulnerable to abuse, forced labor, and deportation for minor infractions including traffic violations and "absconding" from an employer. In April, a video, apparently filmed by her employer, captured an Ethiopian domestic worker falling from the seventh floor of an apartment building. Authorities reportedly charged the employer for failing to assist the worker.

Freedom of expression

Kuwaiti authorities have invoked several provisions in the constitution, penal code, Printing and Publication Law, Misuse of Telephone Communications and Bugging Devices Law, Public Gatherings Law, and National Unity Law to prosecute journalists, politicians, and activists for criticizing His Highness the Amir, the government, religion, and rulers of neighboring countries in blogs or on Twitter, Facebook, or other social media.

Prosecutions for protected speech are ongoing in Kuwaiti courts. Kuwaiti officials and activists reported that many, if not most, initial complaints in these cases are filed by individuals, underscoring the need to further amend broadly written or overly vague Kuwaiti laws to ensure adequate protections for speech and expression. Kuwaiti courts continued to issue deportation orders in some of these cases, including against members of the Bedoon population, although Kuwaiti officials reported these orders would not be implemented.

In 2016, Kuwait amended the election law to bar all those convicted for "insulting" God, the prophets, or His Highness the Amir from running for office or voting in elections. The law is likely to bar some opposition members of parliament from contesting or voting in future elections. The Cybercrime Law, which went into effect in 2016, includes far-reaching restrictions on internet-based speech, such as prison sentences, and fines for insulting religion, religious figures, and His Highness the Amir.

Treatment of minorities

Kuwait has a population of about 100,000 stateless persons, known as Bedoon, whose predicament dates to the foundation of the Kuwaiti state.

After an initial registration period for citizenship ended in 1960, authorities shifted Bedoon citizenship claims to administrative committees that for decades have avoided resolving the claims. Authorities claim that many Bedoons are "illegal residents" who deliberately destroyed evidence of another nationality to receive benefits.

Members of the Bedoon community have taken to the streets to protest the government's failure to address their citizenship claims, despite government warnings that Bedoons should not gather in public. Article 12 of the 1979 Public Gatherings Law bars non-Kuwaitis from participating in public gatherings. In September, a Bedoon man reportedly set himself on fire to protest the status and conditions of the Bedoons in Kuwait.

Terrorism

In October, Kuwait's Constitutional Court found that an overbroad 2015 law that required all Kuwaiti citizens and residents to provide DNA samples to authorities violated the right to privacy. The law was introduced after the June 2015 suicide bombing of the Imam Sadiq Mosque. Authorities reported to local media at the time that anyone failing to comply with the law would be subject to sanctions, including cancelling their passports and a possible travel ban. In 2016, the United Nations Human Rights Committee found the law

imposed "unnecessary and disproportionate restrictions on the right to privacy."

Women's rights, sexual orientation, and gender identity

Kuwaiti personal status law, which applies to Sunni Muslims who make up most Kuwaitis, discriminates against women. For example, some women require a male guardian to conclude their marriage contracts; women must apply to the courts for a divorce on limited grounds unlike men who can unilaterally divorce their wives; and women can lose custody of their children if they remarry someone outside the family. Men can marry up to four wives, without the permission or knowledge of the other wife or wives. A man can prohibit his wife from working if it is deemed to negatively affect the family interests. The rules that apply to Shiite Muslims also discriminate against women.

Kuwait has no laws prohibiting domestic violence or marital rape. A 2015 law establishing family courts set up a center to deal with domestic violence cases, but requires the center to prioritize reconciliation over protection for domestic violence survivors. Article 153 of the Kuwaiti penal code stipulates that a man who finds his mother, wife, sister, or daughter in the act of adultery and kills them is punished by either a small fine or no more than three years in prison. Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis, unlike Kuwaiti men, cannot pass citizenship to their children or spouses. Adultery and extramarital intercourse are criminalized, and same-sex relations between men are punishable by up to seven years in prison. In 2017, Kuwait reportedly deported 76 men on suspicion of being gay. Transgender people can be arrested under a 2007 penal code provision that prohibits "imitating the opposite sex in any way."

Death penalty

Kuwait maintains the death penalty for nonviolent offenses, including drug-related charges. In January, it carried out seven executions by hanging, the first executions since 2013. Human Rights Watch has documented due process violations in Kuwait's criminal justice system that have made it difficult for defendants to get a fair trial, including in capital cases.

US Department of State's Report on Human Rights Practices in Kuwait for 2017 - Part II

Section 2. Respect for civil liberties, including:

a. Freedom of Expression, Including for the Press

The constitution provides for freedom of expression including for the press, although these rights were violated. The courts convicted more than one dozen individuals for expressing their opinions, particularly on social media. The law also imposes penalties on persons who create or send "immoral" messages and gives unspecified authorities the power to suspend communication services to individuals on national security grounds.

Freedom of Expression: The Press and Publications Law establishes topics that are off limits for publication and discussion, and builds on the precedent set by the penalty law. Topics banned for publication include religion, in particular Islam; criticizing the Amir; insulting members of the judiciary or displaying disdain for the constitution; compromising classified information; insulting an individual or his/her religion; and publishing information that could lead to devaluing of the currency or creating false worries about the economy. The law mandates jail terms for anyone who "defames religion," and any Muslim citizen or resident may file criminal charges against a person the complainant believes has defamed Islam.

The government generally restricted freedom of speech in instances purportedly related to national security. Any citizen may file charges against anyone the citizen believes defamed the ruling family or harmed public morals.

The courts convicted more than one dozen individuals for insulting the Amir, the judiciary, neighboring states, or religion on their social media sites.

In July the Court of Cassation upheld rulings made by the Court of Appeals and the Criminal Court and sentenced ruling family member Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem to three years in prison with hard labor for allegedly insulting the Amir and one of his ministers.

Press and Media Freedom: Independent media were active and expressed a wide variety of views. All print media were privately owned, although their independence was limited. The government did not permit non-Islamic religious publishing companies, although several churches published religious materials solely for their congregations' use. The law allows for large fines and up to 10 years in prison for persons who use any means (including media) to subvert the state. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry may ban any media organization at the request of the Ministry of Information. Media organizations can challenge media bans in the administrative courts. Newspaper publishers must obtain an operating license from the Ministry of Information. In August the Public Prosecutor ordered a gag on publishing news or comments related to five state security cases. The order covered print, news, and digital media, including social media sources on the basis that it hampered the progress of the investigations and harmed national security. Broadcast media are a mix of government and privately owned stations, subject to the same laws as print media.

Throughout the year publishers reportedly received pressure from the Ministry of Information, resulting in the publishers often restricting which books are made available in the country. As of October the Ministry of Information received approximately 9,000 books for review—5,800 of them were published while 951 were banned due to content violating religious, political, and public morality guidelines. Nine of the authors whose books were banned requested to go through the appeals process to get permission to publish. Only four of those books have been reviewed by the appeals committee as of October, and two were allowed to be published, while two other books remained banned. According to the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs reviewed books of a religious nature.

National Security: The law forbids publication or transmission of any information deemed subversive to the constitutional system on national security grounds. The government prosecuted online bloggers and social media outlets under the new cybercrime law, the Printing and Publishing Law, and the National Security Law.

Internet freedom

In 2015 the government passed a cybercrime law that criminalizes online activity to include illegal access to information technology systems; unauthorized access to confidential information; blackmail; use of the internet for terrorist activity; money laundering; and utilizing the internet for human trafficking. Fines ranged from 3,000 dinars (\$9,900) and a three-year prison term for online blackmail to 50,000 dinars (\$165,000) and a 10-year prison sentence for money laundering. Newspaper reports indicated that nearly 1,853 cybersecurity cases were filed under this law in the first six months of the year.

The government also implemented a new E-Licensing program that requires bloggers and websites in the country to register with the Ministry of Information and apply for a license. Any person or organization, such as a news outlet, that is working without a license is subject to fines ranging from 500 to 5,000 dinars (\$1,650 to \$16,500). The ministry has issued 453 licenses to individuals and organizations this year.

The government continued to monitor internet communications, such as blogs and discussion groups, for defamation and generalized security reasons. The Ministry of Communications blocked websites considered to "incite terrorism and instability" and required internet service providers to block websites that "violate [the country's] customs and traditions." The government prosecuted and punished individuals for the expression of political or religious views via the internet, including by email and social media, based on existing laws related to libel, national unity, and national security. The government prosecuted some online bloggers under the 2006 Printing and Publishing Law and the National Security Law. Individuals must receive a license from the Ministry of Information to establish a website.

The government filtered the internet primarily to block pornography and LGBTI material, and sites critical of Islam. The country had a high rate of internet access due partly to pervasive ownership of smart phones. The World Bank reported an internet access rate of 82 percent in 2016.

b. Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association

Freedom of peaceful assembly
The constitution provides for freedoms of peaceful assembly and association, but the government restricted this right in the case of noncitizens. The law prohibits them from demonstrating or protesting. Officials sometimes also restricted the location of planned protests to designated public spaces, citing public safety and traffic concerns. In April, however, hundreds of supporters of the prominent opposition leader Musallam Al-Barrak celebrated his release from prison with an impromptu rally and procession from the Central Prison to his house without any government interference. In the past courts have tried and sentenced participants in unlicensed demonstrations to prison terms and deported noncitizens for participating in rallies.

Freedom of association

The constitution provides for freedom of association, but the government restricted this right. The law prohibits officially registered groups from engaging in political activities.

c. Freedom of Movement

The constitution generally provides for freedom of internal movement, but numerous laws constrain foreign travel.

The government generally cooperated with UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, returning refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, or other individuals of concern.

Abuse of Migrants, Refugees, and Stateless Persons: There were widespread reports of abuse of migrant workers, especially domestic workers from Asia. Because there is no path to citizenship, all workers are considered expatriates and not labeled as migrants.

The law does not provide for granting asylum or refugee status. There is no system for providing protection to refugees, and the government did not grant refugee status or

asylum during the year. According to UNHCR there were more than 3,000 registered asylum seekers and recognized refugees in the country. Most of these were from Syria, Iraq, and Somalia, and many were either employed with access to basic services or supported by human rights groups pending resolution of their UNHCR asylum requests and resettlement. Many were increasingly fearful of losing their jobs and/or residency status. Due to populist anti-expatriate sentiments in the country, the cabinet enacted policy making healthcare and education more expensive for foreign workers than for citizens. The immediate effect of this policy was witnessed by human rights organizations who reported that many foreign workers and their families that were receiving medical treatment chose to be discharged from hospitals rather than receive treatment they could no longer afford. Compounded by stagnant wages, higher cost of living, and a lack of job security, more persons—even legally employed workers, especially from conflict zones—began seeking asylum and resettlement in Europe, America, and Australia.

The law does not provide noncitizens, including bedoons, a clear or defined opportunity to gain nationality. The judicial system's lack of authority to rule on the status of stateless persons further complicated the process for obtaining citizenship, leaving bedoons with no access to the judiciary to present evidence and plead their case for citizenship. According to 2016 government figures, there were approximately 96,000 bedoons in the country, while Human Rights Watch estimated the bedoon population at more than 105,000.

The naturalization process for bedoons is not transparent, and decisions appeared arbitrary. The Central Agency for Illegal Residents, tasked with monitoring bedoons' affairs, had more than 96,000 bedoon citizenship requests under review. According to UNHCR the bedoon population can be broken down into 8,000 who have clear and legitimate claims to citizenship, 35,000 who could possibly be eligible, and the remainder who have little or no claim under current laws.

According to bedoon activists and government officials, many bedoons were unable to provide documentation proving ties to the country sufficient to qualify for citizenship. The government alleged that the vast majority of bedoon concealed their "true" nationalities and were not actually stateless. Agency officials have extended special benefits to bedoons to entice them to disclose their true nationality. So far 10,000 bedoons have admitted holding other nationalities. They claimed benefits that include residency that can be renewed every five years, free healthcare and education services as well as ration cards. Other privileges to those that come forward to adjust their status include priority employment after local nationals and obtaining driving licenses.

According to UNHCR some bedoons underwent DNA testing to prove their Kuwaiti nationality. Bedoons are required to submit DNA samples confirming paternity in order to become naturalized, a practice critics said leaves them vulnerable to denial of citizenship based on DNA testing.

The government discriminated against bedoons in some areas. Some bedoons and international NGOs reported that the government did not uniformly grant some government services and subsidies to bedoons, including education, employment, medical care, and the issuance of civil documents, such as birth, marriage, and death certificates. Bedoon activists claimed many bedoon families were unable to obtain birth certificates for their children, which restricted the children's ability to obtain government-issued identification cards, access adequate medical care, and attend school. The Court of Appeals affirmed court jurisdiction over bedoons' complaints against the Central Agency including those related to certificate issuance. The Court of Appeals overturned the ruling issued by a first instance court that dismissed a complaint by a female bedoon against the agency that denied her the right to be issued some certificates over lack of jurisdiction. The agency's attorneys pleaded that the agency work falls under the "sovereignty acts" that cannot be challenged in courts (such as citizenship issues).

The Ministry of Education partners with the Charity

Fund for Education to pay for bedoon children to attend private schools, but the children must fall into one of seven categories to qualify for an education grant. Many adult bedoons also lacked identification cards, preventing them from engaging in lawful employment or obtaining travel documents. This restriction resulted in some bedoon children not receiving an education and working as street vendors to help support their families. Many bedoon children who attended school enrolled in substandard private institutions because only citizens may attend public school.

The government allowed bedoons to work in some government positions, as dictated in the 2011 decree, including in the military. In April the government announced a new initiative that would allow the sons of soldiers who served in the military for 30 years and the sons of soldiers killed or missing in action to be eligible to join the military. Since the government treats them as illegal immigrants, bedoons do not have property rights. Foreign Travel: Bedoons and foreign workers faced problems with, or restrictions on, foreign travel. The government restricted the ability of some bedoons to travel abroad by not issuing travel documents, although it permitted some bedoons to travel overseas for medical treatment and education, and to visit Saudi Arabia for the annual Hajj (Islamic pilgrimage). The Ministry of Interior has not issued "Article 17" passports (temporary travel documents that do not confer nationality) to bedoons except on humanitarian grounds since 2014.

The law also permits travel bans on citizens and non-nationals accused or suspected of violating the law, including nonpayment of debts, and it allows other citizens to petition authorities to impose one. This provision resulted in delays and difficulties for citizens and foreigners leaving the country.

Exile: While the constitution prohibits exile of citizens, the government can deport foreigners for a number of legal infractions.

Citizenship: By law the government is prohibited from revoking the citizenship of an individual who was born a citizen unless that individual has obtained a second nationality, which is against the law. The country does not give birthright citizenship based on the right of anyone born in the territory to nationality or citizenship. Additionally, the government can revoke the citizenship of naturalized citizens for cause, including a felony conviction and, subsequently, deport them. The government has justified the revocation of citizenship by citing a 1959 nationality law that permits withdrawal of citizenship from naturalized Kuwaitis who acquired citizenship dishonestly or threatened to "undermine the economic or social structure of the country." Additionally, if a person loses citizenship, all family members whose status derives from that person also lose their citizenship and all associated rights.

The Court of Cassation ruled that the courts had jurisdiction over citizen revocation cases. Persons who had their citizenship revoked, and any family members dependent on that individual for their citizenship status, became stateless individuals. Authorities can seize the passports and civil identification cards of persons who lose their citizenship and enter a "block" on their names in government databases. This "block" prevented former citizens from traveling or accessing health care and other government services reserved for citizens. In April the Council of Ministers created a committee presided over by Amiri adviser and former speaker Ali Al-Rashid to review complaints of citizenship revocations since 1991. The committee restored the citizenships of seven out of 184 families. There were no known revocations of citizenship during the year. The law prohibits the granting of citizenship to non-Muslims, but it allows non-Muslim male citizens to transmit citizenship to their descendants. According to the law, children derive citizenship solely from the father; children born to citizen mothers and non-national fathers do not inherit citizenship. Female citizens may sponsor their nonnational children (regardless of age) and husbands for residency permits, and they may petition for naturalization for their children if the mother becomes divorced or widowed from a noncitizen husband.

— To be continued in tomorrow's issue

Local

Ministers examine grilling motions, call for focus on basic issues

Cabinet seeks collective effort to revamp corruption index

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Cabinet at its weekly session yesterday examined interpellation motions tabled by MPs against His Highness the Prime Minister and the ministers, urging the legislators to focus on crucial issues that affect citizens' interests.

The ministers examined the motions, addressed to His Highness the Prime Minister, Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Oil Minister and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakhit Al-Rashidi, Minister of Social Affairs, Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh.

They studied their constitutional and legal aspects and axes, affirming the cabinet keenness on dealing with these interpellations like previous ones, according to the Constitution and the parliament by-laws. They also affirmed necessity of concentrating efforts on crucial national causes, genuine issues that affect citizens' preoccupations and interests for sake of finding optimal solutions and boost the process of development.

Corruption index

Meanwhile, the Cabinet underlined that all min-

istries and state agencies need to work together to overhaul Kuwait's international corruption perception index. It is also imperative to complete a holistic national strategy to fight corruption, promote and back the Public Anti-Corruption Authority's tasks and powers, draw investments, improve business atmosphere, streamline procedures and introduce more online services, the cabinet urged during its customary weekly meeting.

Cabinet hails nuclear program freeze

The Cabinet discussed a report produced by an ad hoc committee tasked with reviewing Kuwait's international corruption perception index, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said in a statement following the meeting. The report embraced a set of necessary policies and measures aiming at improving the country's corruption ranking by means of simplifying investment procedures, creating a congenial business environment, he said.

An international conference can be held in Kuwait, in cooperation with concerned regional and international organizations, on the country's anti-corruption

efforts, the minister added. Some pieces of legislation also need to be revised in order to revamp Kuwait's standing and allow nongovernmental organizations to play a more active role in this regard.

Furthermore, a media plan should be adopted, using the help of local and world media organizations, with a view to promoting the country's legislative and supervisory policies which are purposed to combat corruption, the minister added.

Nuclear program

In the meantime, the Cabinet hailed North Korea's recent decision to suspend its nuclear and ballistic missiles' programs. According to a statement after the session, the ministers affirmed, during the meeting, that such a positive step by Pyongyang would help in building confidence and defusing tension worldwide for a long period of time. It will also contribute to bolstering security, stability and will be helpful for denuclearization in the Korean peninsula.

North Korea has announced suspending its nuclear and long-range missiles' programs, in anticipation of a crucial summit by top leaders of the two Koreas, as well as an encounter between the North Korean and American presidents.

Moreover, the cabinet condemned the deadly blast that targeted a polling station in Kabul, Afghanistan, leaving scores of people dead or wounded. The cabi-



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the Cabinet's weekly meeting yesterday.— KUNA

net denounced the suicidal attack, the latest of a chain of ugly terrorist crimes, and urged the international community to double efforts for ridding the world of this peril. On recent martyrdom of four Saudi security officers due to hit-and-run shooting in Asir, the ministers condemned the attack asserting support for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in its efforts to safeguard its security.— KUNA

Govt won't ask to postpone grilling motions

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The government has decided to attend today's session to discuss parliamentary grilling motions without asking to postpone them, which means that the session would be a long one that might go on until late at night,

said ministerial sources. They said His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah is ready to respond to a grilling motion filed by MP Hamdan Al-Azemi that is thought to be unconstitutional because it discusses ministers' liabilities and the premier is only questionable regarding the government's policy in general. The sources said that having explained the above, the PM will accept taking the podium out of expressing cooperation between both powers. The sources said a parliamentary majority is against the premier's grilling motion, and it is expected to end with discussions only and without a no-cooperation motion, which is only supported by seven MPs who expressed support in advance and before hearing the premier's responses.

Meanwhile, the sources also stressed that Oil Minister

Bakheet Al-Rasheedi is ready to respond to the grilling motion filed by MPs Omar Al-Tabtabaei and Abdulwahab Al-Babtain, although a parliamentary majority views it as personally-motivated, because the minister has only been in office for three months.

In other news, the government committee entrusted with following up corruption cases finished preparing lists of senior officials who had failed in their missions in a way that harmed the development process, pending referring them for investigations and serious accountability. The sources added that tangible measures are being taken on governmental, legislative and organizational levels to fight corruption by setting suitable legislation that would ensure accelerating proceedings on corruption cases so that this could act as a deterrent for potential violators.

Maqwa fire under control: KOC

KUWAIT: A fire which erupted in Al-Maqwa area due to an oil leak was put under control, Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) announced yesterday. There were no readings for gas leakage in the area, KOC said in a statement, adding that the fire did not cause any casualties. Specialized rescue teams, in cooperation with Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD), managed to put the fire under control, reaffirmed the company.— KUNA

36 percent of illegals availed amnesty: Report

KUWAIT: The grace period the interior ministry gave to residency violators to leave the country without paying any fines and with the possibility of returning, or correcting their status, ended yesterday. A security source said the number of violators who left the country is 34,452, while 20,725 corrected their status and obtained legal residency in the country. The source said the number of those who took advantage is 55,177 people out of a total of 155,000 illegals, or 35.6 percent. The source said all those who started procedures to leave or adjust their status can continue to do so without facing legal charges.

Illegal entry

A Syrian man was arrested for entering the country illegally and was sent to Salmiya police station. Special missions personnel had suspicions about a man, so they approached him. He then started to run, but was caught. Police found he had left the country and his residency was cancelled. He was taken to Salmiya police station for questioning.

Immorality

Naem police station investigator arrested an Egyptian man for urging immorality and misuse of the phone, following an accusation by an Iraqi woman, who gave police printed material. The accused did not give any justification for his actions other than claiming that he was only joking and did not mean to instigate any immoral action. The Iraqi wedding planner told Naem police that the Egyptian,

who works in a company dealing with wedding dresses, sent her indecent messages. The man was detained pending further legal action.

Homosexuals arrested

A Georgian and a Frenchman, who offered sexual services on the Internet, were arrested by vice detectives after they arrived in Kuwait on visit visas to meet customers. The two homosexuals each charge KD 100 per hour for their services.

Assault

A uniformed man lodged a complaint against a Syrian national for beating and insulting him. A security source said the two were sent to the police station for further action.

Fight

Two bedoons and a citizen were injured during a fight in Kabd and were taken to Farwaniya Hospital for treatment of fractures and wounds. Police are investigating.

Abnormal condition

Taima police arrested a driver in an abnormal condition after he collided with three vehicles across a Taima school. Passersby told police that a pick-up truck hit the vehicles, while a passenger threw a bag inside the school. The two were arrested while policemen went to the school to look for the bag.

Mugging

Ahmadi police station investigator published descriptions of an SUV that was stolen from an expat. A security source said an Indian man named Akash, who lives in Abu Halifa, said that he was forced to stop after his vehicle was hit by a car with three persons inside. He said the three men circled him and beat him up, while one of them got inside the vehicle and drove away. Police are investigating.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa



Saudi-led strikes kill at least 20 at Yemen wedding

Nigerians demand air quality data amid pollution fears

Page 7

Page 7



KAESONG: Photo shows a section of the Pyongyang to Kaesong highway. A road accident in North Korea has caused 'heavy casualties' among Chinese tourists, the foreign ministry in Beijing said yesterday. —AFP

32 Chinese tourists die as bus crashes

Bus plunges from a bridge in North Korea

BEIJING: Thirty-two Chinese tourists and four North Koreans were killed when a bus plunged from a bridge in North Korea, Chinese officials and state media said yesterday. Two other Chinese nationals were injured in Sunday's accident south of the capital Pyongyang. Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular press briefing. Lu said China was investigating the cause of the accident and had deployed a team, including medical experts, to North Korea "to assist with the emergency rescue and treatment operations".

The ministry provided few details but China's official Xinhua news agency reported later that the bus had fallen from a bridge in North Hwanghae Province on Sunday night. China's state broadcaster showed images of a large overturned vehicle, with light rain falling on rescue vehicles at night and doctors attending to a patient. China was informed about the accident on Sunday night and its embassy personnel in Pyongyang rushed to the scene, the foreign ministry said in a statement. The vast majority of foreign tourists to North Korea are Chinese, with the Cold

War-era allies sharing a long land border and operating flights between the two countries.

Western visitors to the North once averaged around 5,000 a year, but numbers have been hit recently by a US travel ban - Americans accounted for around 20 percent of the market and official warnings from other countries. Tens of thousands of Chinese tourists are believed to visit the North every year, with many crossing via train through the Chinese border city of Dandong. For some, North Korea provides a window into what Communist China may have looked like decades ago. Chinese tourism to the North has continued even

though Beijing has enforced a slew of United Nations sanctions over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

'All necessary means'

President Xi Jinping urged China's foreign ministry and embassy in North Korea to take "all necessary means" to handle the accident, and called for an "all-out" effort to help the injured and deal with the deceased, according to Xinhua. China's state broadcaster CGTN had tweeted that the tour bus had plunged from a

bridge prior to official confirmation of the accident. The post was later deleted without explanation.

North Hwanghae province lies south of the capital



4 North Koreans among 36 killed

The threat of nuclear weapons use growing, United Nations warns

GENEVA: A top UN official yesterday denounced growing rhetoric claiming that nuclear arms are necessary and warned that the risk of such weapons being used was on the rise. "The threat of the use, intentional or otherwise, of nuclear weapons is growing," the UN's representative for disarmament affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, told a preliminary review meeting of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The United States, which holds one of the world's largest nuclear arsenals, also warned the conference that the prospects for progress on disarmament were currently "bleak". The NPT, introduced at the height of the Cold War a half century ago, seeks to prevent the spread of atomic weapons while putting the onus on nuclear states to reduce their stockpiles. Speaking at the opening of the Geneva meeting, Nakamitsu warned that "the world today faces similar challenges to the context that gave birth to the NPT."

The NPT treaty, which counts 191 state parties, faces a comprehensive review every five years, with preparatory committees each year in between. The next full review of the treaty is scheduled for 2020. The year's meeting comes after North Korea, which pulled out of the treaty 15 years ago, declared a moratorium on nuclear and long-range missile tests and said it would dismantle its nuclear test site. Nakamitsu hailed the announcement, voicing hope that the move "will contribute to building trust and to sustaining an atmosphere for sincere dialogue and negotiations."

'Keep pressure' on Pyongyang

Other speakers at the opening of the Geneva meeting, including the European Union representative,

stressed the need to "keep pressure" on North Korea. And Christopher Ford, US Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation, insisted that Pyongyang had "yet to return to compliance" of the NPT. North Korea's nuclear program was one reason why "the nonproliferation regime today faces great threats," he said, also pointing to Iran's nuclear program. Ford said the NPT treaty had made great strides over the past half century to avoid proliferation and ward off the use of nuclear weapons, but warned that "deteriorating security conditions have made near-term prospects for further progress on disarmament bleak."

Nakamitsu also cautioned that the overall "geopolitical environment is deteriorating." "Some of the most important instruments and agreements that comprise our collective security framework are being eroded," she said. "Rhetoric about the necessity and utility of nuclear weapons is on the rise," she said, stressing that "modernization programs by nuclear-weapons states are leading to what many see as a new, qualitative arms race."

Nakamitsu noted that until recently all the major powers have been engaged in "continuous and successive negotiations on arms control and disarmament." "Yet not only have we seen an unfortunate hiatus in these efforts, there are real concerns that unless we reverse this trend we will soon be back in a situation for the first time in which there are no verified constraints on nuclear arsenals," she said. Five of the world's nine nuclear-armed states - Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States - are parties to the NPT.

India and Pakistan, as well as Israel, which has never acknowledged it has nuclear weapons, have never signed the treaty. But despite their treaty obligations, observers say that all nuclear-armed NPT members are engaged in modernizing their arsenals and making nuclear weapons a more central part of their defense strategies. President Donald Trump's administration has for instance recently decided to upgrade the US nuclear weapons arsenal and to complement massive "strategic" bombs with smaller "tactical" weapons, in a move critics say would make them easier to use. —AFP



SEOUL: A woman walks past a banner showing two hands shaking to form the shape of the Korean Peninsula to support the upcoming inter-Korean summit. South Korea is seeking to open discussions about formally declaring an end to the war with the nuclear-armed North at a rare inter-Korean summit. —AFP

Paris attacks suspect sentenced to 20 years

BRUSSELS: A Belgian court yesterday sentenced the sole surviving suspect in the Paris attacks, Salah Abdeslam, to 20 years in prison on terror charges over a bloody gun battle with police in Brussels days before his capture in 2016. Abdeslam's co-defendant Sofiane Ayari received the same sentence after the pair were convicted of terrorism-related attempted murder over the shootout in which four police officers were wounded. Judges at the court in Brussels said that "there can be no doubt about their commitment to radicalism" as they handed down the maximum jail term as demanded by Belgian prosecutors at the trial in February. "The terrorist nature of the facts under question in March 2016 appears to be established," the judgment said.

Neither Abdeslam, 28, a Belgian-born French national, nor Ayari, a 24-year-old Tunisian citizen, was in court to hear the verdict. Abdeslam is being held in jail in France pending a separate trial over the November 2015 Paris attacks, claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group, in which 130 people died. The pair were convicted of opening fire on a team of Belgian and French police who raided a flat in the Forest area of Brussels on March 15, 2016, following a tip-off about the Paris attacks. —AFP



Salah Abdeslam

International

Schools free disabled in South Sudan's war zone from 'curse'

Integrating children with disabilities into mainstream education

JUBA: Benson Mubarak saw his maths teacher enter the classroom in the South Sudanese capital, Juba, when everything suddenly went black. The confused 15-year-old asked his friends, "What happened? Why is everything dark?" But nothing had changed. Mubarak had become blind. After numerous hospital visits that produced no answers, his parents - ashamed of the situation - saw no alternative but to take their son out of school and lock him up in their mud hut for several years.

Today Mubarak, 22, is back in the classroom and part of a small but growing initiative by aid agencies to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream education. Life is tough for disabled people in the world's youngest country, which fell into a brutal civil war two years after its 2011 independence when troops loyal to President Salva Kiir clashed with forces loyal to Riek Machar, the vice president. Disabilities caused by conflict are on the rise as violence has spread throughout the country, killing tens of thousands.

Sitting at the back of a classroom at the Rejaf Educational Center for the Blind, Mubarak is among an estimated 20 percent of disabled people in South Sudan who attend school. No data is available on the number who graduate. "I am now adjusting to my condition," he told said, wearing a light blue uniform and sunglasses. "Being at home for those years was the hardest part. I couldn't adjust to my blindness and was depressed." The World Health Organization estimates that up to 15 percent of the global population could be disabled, but there is a lack of data on developing countries.

Hidden away

Negative attitudes and stigma towards people with disabilities are widespread in South Sudan and advocating

for change has been tough. "Disabled children may be hidden away and people are often referred to by their disabilities rather than by their names," said Kelly Thayer, emergency coordinator for Humanity and Inclusion, the charity formerly known as Handicap International. "People have the misconception that children with disabilities can't go to school." Many schools are inaccessible and lack special needs teachers, said Thayer, whose organization trains teachers and social workers to ensure inclusion grows.

Poverty and illiteracy add to the challenges, said social welfare minister Awut Deng Acuil, adding that polio, snakebites and accidents also cause disabilities. In Juba, only a handful out of hundreds of schools currently support inclusive education, but the results are positive. Mubarak, who is learning to read and write Braille at his specialized school will soon transfer to a mainstream one. Others have already made the transition. Faiba Gale, 18, is attending high school in Juba's Buluk district, one of the few supporting inclusive education.

"My parents wanted me to pursue an education," said Gale, who fell sick as a child, spent months in hospital and has since never been able to walk without help. "At first it was difficult because I felt different. Now I like going to school and my classmates help me." Dozens of students in white blouses sat with Gale on wooden benches in a simple brick classroom. She did not stand out. "It's not difficult to integrate children with disabilities it's just not done," said head teacher James Jada, whose Buluk A2 Primary School is in its second year of including children with disabilities. "We teach our students to be helpful and we see many friendships form between students with and without disabilities."

Football

Samuel Stephen, 12, has been deaf since birth but, for



JUBA: Faiba Gale, 18, sits in her classroom in Juba, South Sudan. After a childhood illness, she was never able to walk without help again. —Reuters

the last few years, had a teacher who used sign language during classes. "I still don't understand everything that is talked about in class but my teacher explains what she can," he signed to an interpreter. One of his best friends, Martin Arkangelo, also 12, is not deaf, but picked up sign language over the years.

"Samuel and I play football together every day," he said. "It wasn't hard for me to pick up his language. Now we talk with our hands." Even with new integration initiatives, life for disabled people remains especially difficult in war-torn South Sudan. "Many disabled people sit at home or beg in markets," said Anthony Joseph, secretary general

of the Jubek State Union for the Visually Impaired, an initiative by blind people living in and around Juba to advocate for their rights.

"Their families think the disability is a curse and a burden." When fighting broke out in Juba in 2016, Joseph was not far from the area where the initial shots were fired and many died. "We heard gunshots and fell to the ground - it was chaos. Being blind, we didn't know where to go or what to do, until a policeman helped us," he said, adding that people with disabilities often get left behind when violence erupts. "The conflict contributes to our challenge. Being disabled in a war zone - it's tough." —Reuters

Saudi-led strikes kill at least 20 at wedding in Yemen

DUBAI: Air strikes by a Saudi-led military coalition killed at least 20 people attending a wedding in a village in northwestern Yemen late on Sunday, residents and medical sources said. The head of Al Jumhuri hospital in Hajjah told Reuters by telephone that the hospital had received 40 bodies, most of them torn to pieces, and that 46 people had been injured, including 30 children, in air strikes that hit a wedding gathering. Residents and medics told Reuters that 20 people attending the celebration were killed and at least 30 injured. "We take this report very seriously and it will be fully investigated as all reports of this nature are," a spokesman for the Saudi-led coalition said.

Residents of a village called Taiba elsewhere in the province said that a separate air strike killed a family of four in their house on Sunday night. The Western-backed alliance has been fighting a war for three years against the armed Houthi movement which controls the area and much of northern Yemen. It has launched thousands of air strikes in a campaign to restore the internationally recognized government. Errant strikes have killed hundreds of civilians at hospitals, schools and markets.

Al-Masirah, the TV station of the armed Houthi movement which controls the area and much of northern Yemen, said on its Twitter account that 33 people had been killed and 55 wounded. The coalition says it does not target civilians and has set up an investigation committee into alleged mass casualty air strikes which have mostly cleared the coalition of any blame. The Yemen war has killed more than 10,000 people, displaced more than 2 million and driven the country to the verge of famine, according to the United Nations.

Troops, jihadists clash

In another development, five pro-government soldiers



HAJJAH, YEMEN: Yemeni boys, injured in an air raid on a wedding party in Yemen, receive treatment at a hospital in Yemen's Hajjah province yesterday. Dozens were killed and wounded in an air raid on a wedding party in Yemen. —AFP

were killed and 19 wounded in clashes with jihadists in Yemen's southern city of Ta'ez yesterday after the killing of an aid worker with the International Committee of the Red Cross, medics said. It was unknown if there were any casualties among the jihadists. Fighting in the city's Jahmaliah district came after the governor of Ta'ez launched an operation against jihadists he suspected were behind the murder of the ICRC employee over the weekend.

Jahmaliah is controlled by pro-government forces but there is a jihadist presence in the area, a police officer said. A large portion of Yemen's third city Ta'ez is held by pro-government fighters, but the entrances to the city are controlled by Houthi rebels. Fierce clashes broke out after the operation was launched yesterday morning, according to the officer, who was unable to provide fur-

ther details. On Sunday, Ta'ez governor Amin Ahmad Mahmud, loyal to President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi, created a special force of police and army units tasked with battling jihadists he believes killed the ICRC employee on Saturday.

The Lebanese aid worker, Hanna Lahoud, was shot in Ta'ez by unidentified assailants. In March, Yemen entered its fourth year of war between the Iran-backed Houthi rebels and pro-government forces backed by a Saudi-led military coalition. Nearly 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict, which has triggered what the United Nations has called the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Sunni jihadists, including from Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group, have taken advantage of the chaos to expand their influence in parts of Yemen, particularly in the south. — Agencies

Malaysia releases images of suspects

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian police yesterday released computer-generated images of two men suspected of assassinating a Palestinian scientist in a drive-by shooting in Kuala Lumpur, as they stepped up a hunt for the pair. Fadi Mohammad Al-Batsh, 35, was struck down in a hail of bullets by motorbike-riding attackers Saturday as he walked to a mosque for dawn prayers.

The family of Batsh, a member of Islamist militant group Hamas who was said to be a rocket-making expert, has accused Israel's Mossad spy agency of carrying out the killing but Israel has denied the claims. Kuala Lumpur police released photofits of the two suspects, who were seen waiting in the area where Batsh lived before the killing. The pictures show two light-skinned bearded men, one of whom was wearing glasses and a white and black helmet. National police chief Mohamad Fuzi Harun said the suspects wore dark-coloured jackets, were carrying bags and riding a "high-powered motorcycle".

Fourteen bullets were fired at Batsh

during the attack and he suffered "multiple injuries, including on the head and body", the police chief told reporters. The bullets had been sent for analysis, he added. Police also released images of two motorcycles, a BMW and a Kawasaki, one of which was believed to have been ridden by the suspects. Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said at the weekend the suspects were thought to be European and to have ties with a foreign intelligence agency. Mohamad Fuzi said the police were conducting a "comprehensive" investigation and a hunt had been launched for the pair. "We can't be sure if the two suspects are still in the country," he said, urging anyone who might have information to come forward.

High-profile assassination

The scientist's widow, Enas al-Batsh, spent two hours at the hospital holding his body Monday. Batsh had three young children and had lived in Malaysia for 10 years. Abdul Rahim Shehab, a friend of the scientist's, said the Palestinian representative in Malaysia was making arrangements for his body to be sent back home for burial. "Fadi's parents want his body to be buried in Gaza," he said. Mossad is believed to have assassinated Palestinian militants and scientists in the past, but rarely confirms such operations. Batsh's expertise in making weapons could have made him a target-militants in Hamas-ruled Gaza regularly fire rockets



KUALA LUMPUR: This handout photo shows Malaysia Chief Police Mohamad Fuzi Harun (center) with other police officials holding computer-generated images of suspects involved in assassinated a Palestinian scientist in a drive-by shooting in Kuala Lumpur. —AFP

at southern Israel, usually without causing casualties.

But Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman Sunday denied claims of the Jewish state's involvement, suggesting instead that it was a "settling of accounts" between factions of a terror group. Tensions between Israel and Gaza are high, with 38 Palestinians killed in four

weeks of clashes along the border. It was the second high-profile killing of a foreigner in Malaysia in just over a year. In February 2017 assassins smeared the banned VX nerve agent on the face of Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half-brother of North Korea's leader, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, killing him within minutes. —FP

Nigerians demand air quality data over pollution fears

LAGOS: Bolatito Joseph has strong suspicions about what is causing her breathing problems and a mucus build up: a building site near her home and noxious fumes from a rubbish dump close to her church. "I inhale a lot of dust as a result of the construction work going in my area," said Joseph, a cleaner from the Akute area of Nigeria's biggest city, Lagos. "I worship at a church in Ojota near a rubbish dump and the stench is... injurious to public health," she said.

Joseph is not alone in having health problems in Nigeria's cities, where questions are increasingly being asked about whether the air is fit to breathe. In Lagos, in the southwest, the southern oil hub of Port Harcourt and Onitsha in the southeast, Nigerians might be choking to an early death. Diesel generators that compensate for an inadequate electricity grid belch acrid smoke, combining with emissions from old vehicles and traffic gridlock.

Unregulated industry and burning waste further turns the air foul. In 2012, the World Health Organization called air pollution "the world's largest single environmental health risk" and blamed it for about seven million premature deaths globally. Attention has largely focused on efforts to fight pollution in cities such as Beijing and New Delhi, where poor air quality can cause traffic restrictions and school closures. But in Nigeria, the public is largely in the dark, with data lacking and only a handful of scientific studies exploring the phenomenon.

Particulate matter

In 2012, the WHO said there were 46,750 deaths in Nigeria from air pollution, which has been linked to increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, as well as cancer. In megacity Lagos, which is home to some 20 million people, thick plumes of white smoke have been drifting from burning waste at the Olusosun dump site in Ojota for weeks now. Doctors say it has caused a surge in breathing problems.

Onitsha, in Anambra state, has been ranked the worst city in the world for PM10s—microscopic particles of dirt, soot, smoke and liquid droplets in the air that can harm human health. In Port Harcourt—once dubbed "The Garden City" because of its palm trees and green open spaces—black soot has fallen from the sky for more than a year. Rafael Navarro, a Venezuelan working for a global oil major, bought an air quality monitor to confirm his suspicions about what he was breathing. He refused to accept local excuses that the poor air was caused by the Harmattan, the seasonal wind that whips up sand and dust from the Sahara desert and dumps them on the Gulf of Guinea.

"The surprise was that Port Harcourt has many times been in the top five most polluted cities in the world on the AirVisual network," he said. "That was quite shocking, as I was not aware that our numbers could have been that bad." Readings since he installed the device in May last year showed huge spikes overnight and in the early morning of PM2.5s, finer particulate matter in the air that are more harmful to health. Illegal oil refineries in the nearby creeks have been blamed: most operate at night to avoid detection from military patrols.

Low-cost monitoring

Ademola Oduguwa, an electronics and electrical engineering graduate who works in Lagos, said data was key to raising awareness and getting something done. Despite the billions of dollars earned over decades from oil, most Nigerians still live in poverty, making foreign air quality monitors prohibitively expensive. Oduguwa decided to build a low-cost version for \$120 — less than half the retail cost of Navarro's device. He installed four at locations across Lagos. "More often than not, we have seen very high pollution levels being registered in all locations... above the benchmarks of the World Health Organization," he said. —AFP

International

US and French presidents face differences on Iran and trade

'Is better to protect Iran deal than getting rid of it'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump welcomed France's Emmanuel Macron to the White House yesterday at the start of a three-day state visit expected to be dominated by US-European differences on the Iran nuclear deal and souring trade relations. It will be Trump's first hosting of a state visit since he took power in January 2017. The pair got a sense of their two countries' shared history during an evening meal at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, the first US president and Revolutionary War commander whose alliance with France was critical to victory over the British.

The major work between them is scheduled for today during White House meetings, before Macron addresses Congress tomorrow, the anniversary of the day that French General Charles de Gaulle addressed a Joint Session of Congress in 1960. Trump and the 40-year-old French leader began their improbable friendship a year ago in Belgium with a jaw-clenching handshake.

While other European leaders have kept a certain distance from Trump, Macron has worked hard to remain close to the US president and the two leaders speak frequently by phone.

Macron is on something of a rescue mission for the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which Trump has vowed to scrap unless European allies strengthen it

by mid-May. The deal reached between Iran, the United States and five other world powers put curbs on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. Macron said on Fox News Sunday that it would be better to protect the Iran deal instead of get rid of it, saying there is no "Plan B" to take its place. "Is this agreement perfect and this JCPOA a perfect thing for our relationship with Iran? No. But for nuclear-what do you have? As a better option? I don't see it," he said.

Trade talks

Macron also wants to persuade Trump to exempt European nations from steel tariffs that are part of the US president's plan to reduce chronic trade deficits with countries around the world, chiefly China. His visit comes at a time of mounting alarm in Europe over the knock-on effect that US sanctions on Russia will have on their own manufacturing industries. An official in the French presidency said Paris and other European capitals were coordinating efforts to persuade Trump to ease sanctions on Russia, including measures against Russian aluminum producers. "We're working on that with our European partners," the source said.

Macron to address US Congress tomorrow

The two leaders are also expected to discuss Syria, less than two weeks after the United States, France and Britain launched airstrikes in Syria in retaliation for a suspected chemical weapons attack that killed dozens

on these and other issues was unclear. "Whether we will actually solve, or come to closure, or a full detailed agreement on some of the issues that we've touched on is difficult to say at this remove," a senior administration official told reporters on Friday. —Reuters



MOUNT VERNON: Visitors line up to tour the Mansion at Mount Vernon, the estate of the first US President George Washington, in Mount Vernon, Virginia. —AFP

in Douma, Syria. Macron said last week that he believed he had persuaded Trump to keep US troops in Syria, but Trump has been insistent on bringing them home, although he has not publicly provided a definite timetable. Whether substantive progress will be made

on these and other issues was unclear. "Whether we will actually solve, or come to closure, or a full detailed agreement on some of the issues that we've touched on is difficult to say at this remove," a senior administration official told reporters on Friday. —Reuters

French MPs adopt the controversial immigration bill

PARIS: France's National Assembly has adopted a controversial immigration bill that speeds up the asylum process and accelerates deportations after a fierce debate that exposed divisions in President Emmanuel Macron's party. After 61 hours of discussion, the legislation, which was slammed by the left as too tough and the right as too soft, was approved late Sunday by 228 votes in favor to 139 against. Fourteen members of Macron's centrist Republic on the Move (LREM) party were among the 24 MPs who abstained, and one dissident quit the LREM parliamentary group after joining the naysayers—a rare display of defiance in the usually on-message movement.

Jean-Michel Clement, a former member of the Socialist Party who joined Macron's party last year, said he had voted with his "conscience". Opposition was strongest on the right, with the conservative Republicans and far-right National Front (FN) leading a failed charge for much tougher controls on immigration. FN leader Marine Le Pen, who won 36 per cent of the vote in last year's presidential election run-off, said the law would lead to a "flood of migration". But NGOs were also up in arms. Within minutes of the vote Amnesty International France issued a statement warning that the "dangerous" legislation, which allows for failed asylum-seekers to be detained for up to 90 days, jeopardized migrants' rights.

'Locking up foreigners'

The French migrant-support charity Cimade was also sharply critical of the draft law. "So men, women and children can be locked up for three months without committing an offence. No government has ever gone so far on locking up foreigners," it tweeted. But opinion polls show voters supporting stricter rules, which the government presented as necessary to check the rise of populists who are on the march across Europe. On Saturday, far-right activists from various European countries blocked a key mountain pass on the border with Italy to try prevent migrants—mostly young men from west Africa—crossing. France received a record 100,000 asylum applications last year, bucking the general trend in Europe where the number of asylum seekers halved between 2016 and 2017. MPs spent the weekend haggling over more than 1,000 proposed amendments to the bill, which aims to both improve conditions for asylum-seekers by halving the waiting time for a response to six months, and get together with those deemed "economic" migrants. Leftwing opponents lashed out at measures to keep asylum seekers in detention. "Nothing justifies locking up a kid," said Socialist deputy Herve Saulignac.

'Solidarity offence'

Leftist critics had also complained about plans to cut the time within which asylum-claimers can appeal if rejected for refugee status from four weeks to two, saying they would not have enough time to defend their claim. They also came out against a proposed "solidarity offence" targeting people who assist border-jumpers, like farmer Cedric Herrou, a farmer who was given a suspended sentence for helping migrants cross into France from Italy. The government eventually agreed to exempt anyone providing struggling newcomers with food, accommodation, medical, linguistic, legal or social assistance. Among the measures that received broad support on the centre and left were plans to help refugees better integrate, with more free French lessons and the right to work after being in France for six months. Despite the fractious debate, the bill was never really in jeopardy, thanks to Macron's large parliamentary majority. It now moves to the Senate. The horse-trading in the National Assembly came as Macron's reform of the public sector runs into stiff opposition from trade unions and students, who have conducted weeks of strikes, demonstrations and sit-ins. Rail workers object to plans to strip new recruits of jobs-for-life and early retirement while students have occupied some universities over new requirements for admission to public universities. —AFP

UK first abortion clinic exclusion zone enforced

LONDON: A ban on pro-life protests outside an abortion clinic in London came into force yesterday in a first that pro-choice campaigners hope will set a precedent for the country. The local authority in Ealing, west London imposed an exclusion zone after claims that women and staff at the Marie Stopes clinic were being intimidated and harassed by vigils that have been held outside the building for more than 20 years.

The weekend before the ban came into force, a small group of people, including clergymen, gathered on the grass outside the clinic, praying out loud for the women inside and their children. One of them stood by the entrance, offering leaflets to women going in, while on the ground, laminated color photographs showing an unborn foetus were laid out. Sitting in a fold-up chair in the shade of a tree, a rosary in his hand, local pensioner Eamonn Gill rejected claims of harassment, saying: "We're just offering help."

But he added: "People don't want to listen to the truth. They're using violence to abort a baby, to murder a baby. It feels pain, and they don't want to see it." Abortion became legal in Britain by an act of parliament that came into force 50 years ago on Friday. It has strong public support, but protests outside clinics are increasing, some by groups funded from the United States. The buffer zone in Ealing, a leafy residential district, was introduced after a petition signed by 3,600 local residents, followed by a public consultation.

So traumatic

Weekly vigils have been held for 23 years at the clinic, which provides abortions and vasectomies on the state-run National Health Service (NHS), but in recent years these increased to almost daily. Since 2015 there have also been counter-protests by local campaign group Sister Supporter. Its founder Anna Veglio-White, now 25, grew up in the area and said she often saw women leaving the clinic in tears after

History of 3rd-born in UK royal family

LONDON: Prince William and his wife Kate's new baby boy is the third child of a man one day destined to be king. AFP looks back at the curious lives of previous third children of British monarchs. Some reigned themselves, others fought in wars, survived shipwrecks or died prematurely.

Prince Andrew

(Son of Queen Elizabeth II, 1960) - Andrew joined the navy and served during the 1982 Falklands War, risking his life using his helicopter as a decoy for incoming missiles. The Duke of York married Sarah Ferguson in 1986. They had two daughters, Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie, but divorced in 1996. From 2001 to 2011 he was Britain's special envoy for trade.

Princess Mary

(Daughter of king George V, 1897-1965) - Aged 17, she founded the Princess Mary Christmas gift box for World War I troops. Around 2.5 million were delivered before the scheme closed in 1920. She was particularly close to her oldest brother king Edward VIII even after his abdication in 1936. Mary married the future earl of Harewood and had two sons. Widowed in 1947, she died of a heart attack aged 67.

Princess Louise

(Daughter of king Edward VIII, 1867-1931) - Louise spent much of her childhood at the royals' Sandringham private estate. She married the Duke of Fife, who died of pleurisy in 1911 shortly after the couple were shipwrecked off Morocco. She died in 1931 after suffering a gastric haemorrhage.

Princess Alice

(Daughter of queen Victoria, 1843-1878) - Alice nursed her father prince Albert until his death from typhoid in 1861. She married the minor German royal prince Louis of Hesse. A prolific



LONDON: People attend an anti-abortion pro-life vigil on the street outside the Marie Stopes clinic, that offers contraception and abortion services, in Ealing, west London. —AFP

being confronted by members of the vigil. "You cannot avoid them and you feel so judged, because they are calling you a murderer," Veglio-White, who also organized the local petition, told AFP. "I went past one day and they had plastic foetus dolls. Another time they were blocking the gate. They would call them 'mum'-it's so traumatic." Before it made its decision, the council heard staff reports of how some clients were followed after leaving, and they themselves faced verbal abuse and were spat at.

No protests from either side are allowed inside the buffer

zone, but there is a designated space for limited vigils to continue in sight of the clinic. However, the national Society for the Protection of Unborn Children has condemned it as "an all-out attack on the freedom of expression and on the freedom to pray". Clare McCullough, director of the Good Counsel Network, one of several groups that holds the vigils, strongly denies any harassment or intimidation. "It's about giving them information," she told AFP, saying that her group which also holds vigils at two other London clinics—has helped more than 500 women in Ealing in the last five years. —AFP



LONDON: Princess Charlotte of Cambridge (left) turns to wave at the media as she is led in with her brother Prince George of Cambridge (right) by their father Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge at the Lindo Wing of St Mary's Hospital in central London to visit Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, and their newborn son. —AFP

patron of women's causes, she managed field hospitals in the Austro-Prussian War. When diphtheria infected the Hessian court, she nursed her family before dying herself. A mother of seven, her daughter Alix married tsar Nicholas II of Russia, was murdered by the Bolsheviks and made a saint in 2000.

King William IV

(Son of king George III, 1765-1837) - William's elder brothers, the future king George IV and prince Frederick, who died in 1827, had no children, leaving William next in line. He lived with the actress Dorothea Jordan and they had 10 illegitimate children. To sire a legitimate heir, the duke of Clarence married princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen in 1818, but their two children born alive both quickly died. He was king from 1830. His reign saw several reforms including abolishing slavery throughout the British empire. —AFP

Black ex-high court justice touted as Brazil's savior

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilians are desperate for a fresh face in the presidency after years of crisis. And in Joaquim Barbosa, a black former Supreme Court justice who started as a janitor, they may have just found him. The 63-year-old has yet to declare his candidacy in this October's presidential election. But that can't stop the buzz. At an event last week in Brasilia with the Brazilian Socialist Party, which he recently joined, journalists mobbed Barbosa, wanting to know whether he'd run.

"I haven't yet managed to convince even myself that I should be a candidate," he answered, adding that his family opposed the idea. Hesitancy would be understandable. Barbosa has never once run for elected office and Brazil's treacherous political scene is hardly for beginners. But analysts say Barbosa, who rose from poverty to first black chief justice of the Supreme Court, has unique credentials.

This is a country that in just three years has seen leftist president Dilma Rousseff impeached, her center-right replacement and current President Michel Temer charged with corruption, and her predecessor Lula Inacio Lula da Silva jailed two weeks ago. So in an election filled with uncertainty, the only sure thing is that many Brazilians want an outsider. And with the country's elite, including Lula, Temer and scores of lawmakers, enmeshed in the mammoth "Car Wash" corruption scandal, they also want someone tough on graft. Enter Barbosa. —AFP

International

China's 'men only' job culture slammed in new HRW report

'Gender Discrimination in Job Advertisements in China'

HONG KONG: Leading Chinese firms including e-commerce giant Alibaba were heavily criticized yesterday for gender discrimination in job adverts in a new report which said the landscape for the female workforce in China was deteriorating. The report by campaign group Human Rights Watch (HRW), entitled "Only Men Need Apply: Gender Discrimination in Job Advertisements in China", details a host of offences by private companies and public bodies, from issuing "men only" job ads to requests for women applicants to be "trim" and "aesthetically pleasing".

The adverts reflect "traditional and deeply discriminatory views" that women are less capable than men and that they will not be committed to their jobs because of their role as family caregivers, it said. According to the report, discrimination in hiring practices is contributing to a drop in the female workforce and a widening gender pay gap. Although such discrimination is illegal in China, rules are unclear and rarely enforced, it added. Tech behemoths Alibaba, Tencent and Baidu had all published job ads that openly stated a preference for male applicants, the report said.

Alibaba was also accused of repeatedly using the lure of attractive female co-workers in its recruitment campaigns, describing them as "Ali beauties" and "goddesses" on social media. Tencent, Baidu and leading telecom firm Huawei were also among the major companies that advertised the beauty of their female employees. Speaking at the launch of the report in

Hong Kong, Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth said CEOs must take the lead. "If you have an anti-discrimination provision in your annual report and feel like you've done your job, you're failing miserably. What's needed is serious implementation," he said.

Company contrition

Tencent issued an apology after the report's publication, saying the company is investigating the incidents and seeking to make "immediate changes". "We are sorry they occurred and we will take swift action to ensure they do not happen again," a Tencent spokesperson told AFP. Alibaba said in a statement it would "conduct stricter reviews" of recruitment ads to ensure they complied with its policy of equality. An Alibaba staffer told AFP the HRW report referred to "outdated" adverts from 2012 to 2015 and that the company immediately takes down adverts that violate internal regulations against discrimination.

Baidu said the job ads in question had been removed before the release of the report and that it regretted any adverts that did not reflect its values. "These job postings... were isolated instances that in no way reflect our company's dedication to workplace equality," a Baidu spokesperson said. Huawei did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment. Government departments were also at fault. Nearly one in five job ads for China's 2018 national



HONG KONG: A pile of booklets entitled 'Only Men Need Apply' is displayed during a press conference upon the launch of a new report by Human Rights Watch on discriminatory job advertisements in China at the Foreign Correspondents Club in Hong Kong yesterday. —AFP

civil service called for "men only" or "men preferred". Adverts for female train conductors required them to be "trim", "fashionable" and "beautiful".

The 99-page report analyzed more than 36,000 job advertisements posted between 2013 and 2018 on Chinese recruitment and company websites and on social media platforms. Its research was restricted by the increasing pressure on women's rights activists,

who have been targeted by authorities. Some women have succeeded in taking employers to court over discriminatory job adverts, but the fines handed to firms are negligible and not a deterrent, the report said. Although a #MeToo movement exposing sexual harassment has recently emerged in China, authorities have deleted some social media posts and closed related topic forums in an attempt to control it. —AFP



China tech firms pledge to end sexist job ads

Axes, sunglasses and now summit at Korea's DMZ

PANMUNJOM: In the Demilitarized Zone that has divided the two Koreas for decades, the two sides come face-to-face with the contradictory narratives that will underlie a summit at the site this week. South Korean guards chosen for their height and looks, and sporting aviator sunglasses stand stern and unmoving outside the blue huts of the Joint Security Area in Panmunjom, only meters from North Korean positions. The truce village is a frequent destination for tourists on both sides of the border, and for US presidents seeking to symbolically demonstrate Washington's commitment to defend Seoul from the nuclear-armed North. And on Friday North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will walk across the gravel between the huts to meet South Korean President Moon Jae-in, in only the third such encounter since the Korean War. Seoul and Pyongyang remain technically at war after the 1950-53 conflict ended in an armistice rather than a peace treaty. A US security escort tells visitors on the southern side that the South Korean soldiers "stand face-to-face with the enemies on a daily basis".

He highlights the 1976 killing of two US soldiers who were "brutally axed to death" with their own implements by North Korean guards when they tried to prune a tree whose leaves were blocking the US-led United Nations forces' view. The incident triggered Operation Paul Bunyan, described as the most expensive tree-felling in history. A total of 813 troops, 23 vehicles, 27 helicopters and a number of B-52 Stratofortress bombers with fighter escorts were deployed to cut down the offending poplar as a US aircraft carrier and its accompanying task force patrolled close offshore, in a monumental display of power.



PANMUNJOM: A North Korean soldier walks up steps towards Panmun hall on the north side of the truce village of Panmunjom, before the South Korea and US-controlled Freedom House (rear) within the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea. —AFP

'Valuable lesson'

The inter-Korean summit will be the first to take place south of the border after meetings in Pyongyang in 2000 and 2007, and will be held in the Peace House, a concrete and glass building whose name-along with the nearby Freedom House-is an object of scorn north of the border. "It may seem like they have achieved freedom and peace," said Lieutenant Kim of the Korean People's Army, the North's military, but he blamed the US for the division of the peninsula. "This shows the true nature of America," he told AFP. "It gets in the way of peace."

The meeting between Moon and Kim comes ahead of one due between the North Korean leader and US

President Donald Trump in a whirlwind of diplomacy midwived by the Winter Olympics in the South. It is a dramatic turnaround after the tensions of last year, but to reach any enduring agreement the two sides will have to overcome decades of enmity and mistrust. North Korea proclaims itself to have won the 1950-53 conflict, which it calls the Great Fatherland Liberation War. A large stone plaque on its side of the DMZ commemorates a 2012 visit by Kim, who "gave us a valuable lesson that this is a historic place where the US invaders kneeled before our people to sign their surrender". "Our future generations will live in a reunified motherland," it cites him as declaring. —AFP

Grief turns to anger in Kabul suicide attack

KABUL: Grieving Afghans buried their loved ones in Kabul yesterday amid growing anger over a suicide attack on a voter registration centre in the city that killed at least 57 people including children and wounded more than 100. The bomber blew himself up on Sunday morning in a large crowd queuing to collect their national ID certificates so they could register to vote in long-delayed legislative elections scheduled for October. The force of the blast, which was claimed by the Islamic State group, caused carnage in the street in the heavily Shiite-populated neighborhood in the west of the Afghan capital. Pools of blood and body parts mixed with shattered glass, blood-stained ID documents and passport-sized photos on the ground.

Anguish turned to anger on social media as ordinary Afghans blamed the Kabul government for failing to protect its people—a constant refrain after such attacks. "They (the government) arrests them and then releases them to kill innocent people," Ahmad Ahmadi wrote on Facebook. A Facebook user called Aminullah posted: "This government is intentionally creating chaos to continue their term illegally. The only way forward is to vote and get rid of this corrupt government." Funerals for some of the victims began hours after the attack on Sunday and more bodies were buried yesterday.

At one of the largest Shiite cemeteries in Kabul, half a dozen freshly dug graves could be seen. Around 16 bodies were buried on Sunday afternoon and more funerals were planned. The attack was the latest in a series of assaults on voter registration centers across the country, fuelling concerns over the impact on participation in the upcoming parliamentary and district council elections. Centers in the central



KABUL: An Afghan man digs a grave for one of the 57 victims of a bomb blast before the burial a day after the attack on a voter registration centre in Kabul. —AFP

province of Ghor and the northwestern province of Badghis have been attacked since voter registration began on April 14. Over the next two months, authorities hope to register up to 14 million adults at more than 7,000 polling centers for the parliamentary and district council elections.

Officials have been pushing people to register amid fears a low turnout will undermine the credibility of the polls, which are seen as a test run for next year's presidential vote. Independent Election Commission spokesman Shafi Jalali said Sunday's attack would not interrupt election preparations. "We hold meetings with security force almost every day and they have assured us that they will provide security for all voter registration centers," Jalali said. "The process has not been interrupted and it will continue." —AFP

South Korea switches off propaganda broadcasts

SEOUL: South Korea halted the propaganda broadcasts it blares across the border with North Korea yesterday, aiming to set a positive tone ahead of the first summit in a decade between their leaders as the US president cautioned the nuclear crisis was far from resolved. The gesture came after North Korea said on Saturday it would immediately suspend nuclear and missile tests, scrap its nuclear test site and instead pursue economic growth and peace, a declaration welcomed by world leaders.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is due to hold a summit with South Korean President Moon Jae-In at the border truce village of Panmunjom on Friday, and is expected to meet with President Donald Trump in late May or early June. "North Korea's decision to freeze its nuclear program is a significant decision for the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," South Korean President Moon Jae-in said in a regular meeting at the Blue House yesterday.

"It is a green light that raises the chances of positive outcomes at the North's summits with South Korea and the United States. If North Korea goes the path of complete denuclearization starting from this, then a bright future for North Korea can be guaranteed." South Korea's propaganda broadcasts, which include a mix of news, Korean pop songs, an criticism of the North Korean regime, were stopped at midnight, the defense ministry in Seoul said. It didn't specify if they would resume after the Kim-Moon summit. —Reuters

News in brief

Three brothers beheaded

JALALABAD: Three brothers have been beheaded in restive eastern Afghanistan, officials said yesterday, blaming the gruesome executions on Islamic State group fighters. The men aged 19, 24 and 27 were taken from their home and killed by IS on Sunday night in Chaparhar district in Nangarhar province, provincial governor spokesman Atallah Khogyani said. Nangarhar borders Pakistan and is a stronghold for IS militants. Two of the brothers recently graduated from medical school and the third was still at university, Khogyani said, adding the boys' father was also killed by IS last year. "Their bodies were found in Chaparhar district where they lived," said the spokesman. —AFP

Group attacks migrants

MYTILENE: A far-right group made a violent attack overnight on migrants staging a sit-in protest on the Greek island of Lesbos, injuring around a dozen people, police said yesterday. The violence erupted late Sunday after members of the radical Patriotic Movement gathered on the central square of the island's main city Mytilene, where some 200 Afghan asylum-seekers launched the demonstration last week against their squalid living conditions. Despite a police presence, the situation soon escalated as members of the group threw bottles and lit flares, shouting slogans like "burn them alive" and "throw them in the sea". Tensions spiraled further when leftwing activists arrived to defend the migrants and started fighting with the far-right supporters. —AFP

Protecting whistleblowers

BRUSSELS: Whistleblowers exposing fraud, tax evasion, data breaches and other misdeeds will be given more protection from retaliation under new rules proposed by the European Commission yesterday. The move by the EU executive comes in the wake of criticism from transparency campaigners about the lack of protection granted to individuals who report such breaches in EU laws. They cite the example of two former accounting firm employees who were prosecuted in 2016 for leaking data about Luxembourg's tax deals with large corporations. The conviction of one was overturned by Luxembourg's highest court this year. —Reuters

IS threatens Iraq polls

BAGHDAD: The Islamic State group has threatened to attack Iraqi polling stations and voters during parliamentary elections next month. In a message posted to the Telegram messaging app on Sunday, IS spokesman Abu Hassan Al-Muhajir called on Sunni Iraqis to boycott the May 12 polls, the first since Iraqi Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi declared victory over the jihadists in December. "Oh Sunnis... we know that the government of Rafida (a pejorative Arabic term for Shiites) is on the verge of what they call elections," he said. "Our judgment will apply to those who call for them and participate in them..." —AFP

Madagascans protest

ANTANANARIVO: Hundreds of Madagascan opposition supporters returned to the streets yesterday to protest against the president and a deadly crackdown by security forces on an anti-government demonstration. Two people were killed and at least 16 people wounded at protests in the capital Antananarivo on Saturday that President Hery Rajaonarimampianina denounced as an attempted coup. As on Sunday, security forces banned access to the May 13 square in the city centre during the morning before withdrawing to allow the protesters to gather peacefully. —AFP

Analysis

Kuwait Times
Established 1961
The First Daily in The Arabian Gulf

THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

Facing shipping constraints, Canada moving oil one truckload at a time

At an Alberta oil loading terminal, a convoy of big rigs are gearing up to haul Canadian crude oil hundreds of miles through bone dry fields across the US border into Montana, where the oil will be transferred to pipelines and railcars headed south and west. Trucks loaded with crude are an increasingly common sight at the border. Production has risen in the world's fifth largest producer but full pipelines and a rail car shortage have made it difficult for drillers to ship oil out of Canada.

Some oil producers are feeling the pressure from customers. Alberta-based Gear Energy Ltd pumps about 7,500 barrels of oil equivalent per day, and recently had an Asian customer walk away from an agreement to buy crude after failing to secure a way to ship oil to the West Coast. "We've never had more inbound calls looking for heavy oil," said Gear Chief Executive Officer Ingram Gilmore. "And we have never had more challenges actually getting it to them. It is very frustrating."

Production in Canada rose 8 percent in the last year to a record 4.2 million barrels per day (bpd) and is forecast to keep rising. Over the next five years, OPEC production is expected to only grow modestly, leaving the bulk of forecasted global supply increases to the United States and Canada. But Canada's oil industry faces significant challenges, not the least of which are high production costs, remote oil fields and, perhaps most pressing, the shipping bottlenecks. So significant are the problems that a number of oil majors have withdrawn from Canada.

No easy solution is on the horizon. Plans for new export pipelines are running into opposition from environmentalists, Aboriginal groups and rival provinces. Most recently, Kinder Morgan Canada hit the brakes on its Trans Mountain expansion, and TransCanada Corp has not yet fully committed to its Keystone XL project. Frustrated and fearful of missing out on the rebound in prices, drillers are increasingly relying on trucks to move oil to the market. Crude exports from Canada by road nearly tripled from 2015 to 2017, and continued to rise in the first two months of 2018, according to StatsCan data provided to Reuters.

However, a truck can only carry 200 barrels of oil, compared with 60,000 barrels in one unit train, or nearly 600,000 per day on the Keystone Pipeline - the equivalent of 3,000 trucks. Each one of those trucks needs a driver and enough fuel to carry crude over long distances. Moving crude by truck is at least 10 times more expensive on a mile-for-mile basis compared with rail or pipeline. "We have demand for 50,000 bpd and we can move about a fifth of that," said Jarrett Zielinski, chief executive of Torq Energy Logistics, an Alberta company that owns rail loading facilities and 275 trucks.

Truckin'

Rising opposition to pipelines is hitting Alberta, the landlocked province where most Canadian oil is produced. The fight over the Trans Mountain expansion, which would nearly triple the capacity of the 1,150-km line from Alberta to a British Columbia port, has engulfed two provinces and the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. British Columbia is opposed to the project, which prompted Kinder Morgan to suspend work on the line. Alberta's premier threatened to cut fuel deliveries to its neighboring province in retaliation.

As for trains, during certain months, rail operators face political pressure to prioritize movement of agricultural products. Rail operators want long-term deals from shippers, but oil companies prefer to have the flexibility to shift to pipelines if space becomes available. Exports by road rose from just over 17,000 barrels per month in 2015 to more than 51,000 in 2017, according to data Statistics Canada provided to Reuters. In the first two months of 2018, road exports surged to an average of 180,000 a month. By contrast, rail exports averaged 4 million barrels a month in 2017.

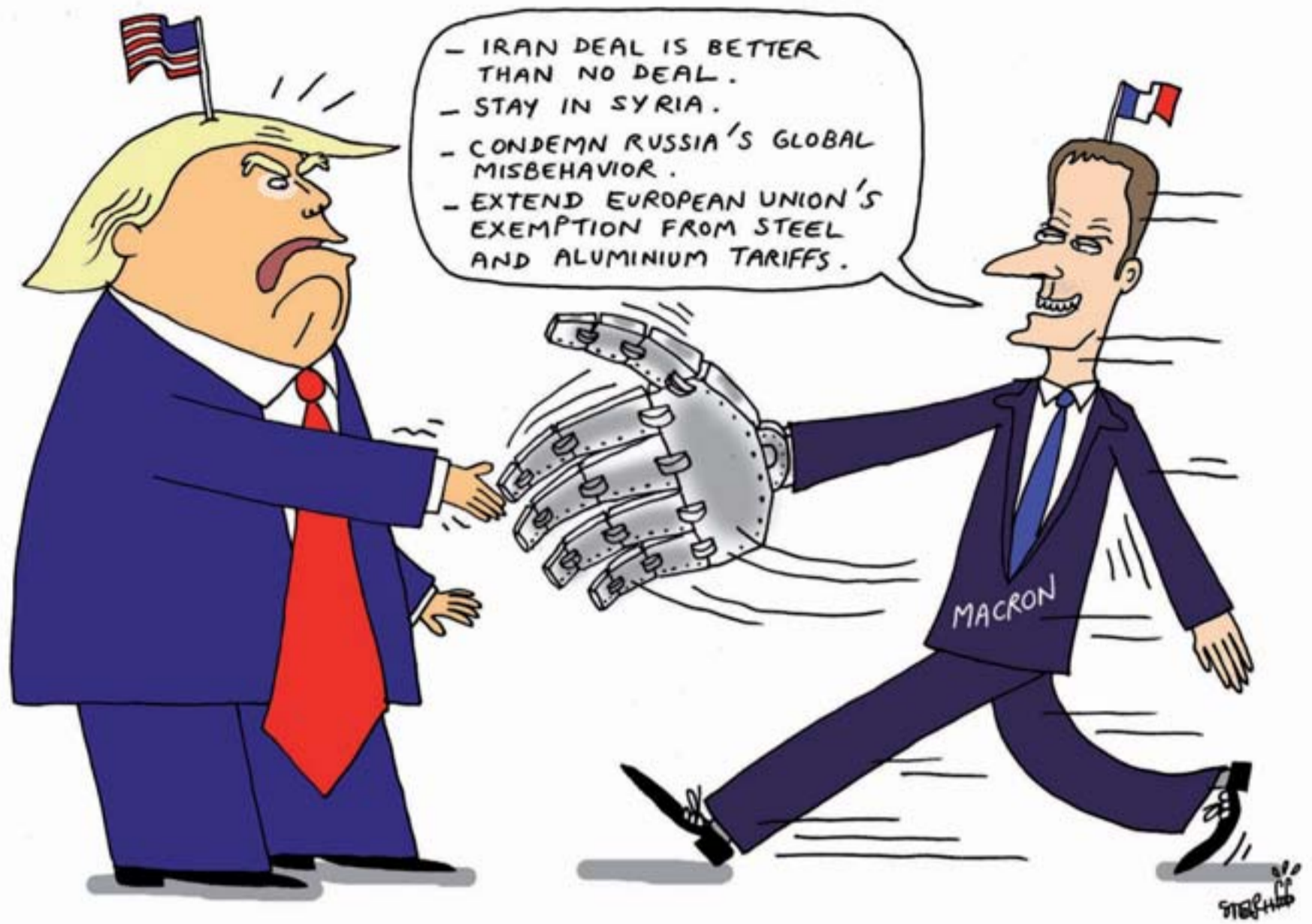
Using trucks allows producers to reach northern US rail loading sites, where there is more capacity and rates are cheaper, Zielinski said. Monthly demand fluctuates based on the discount for western Canadian crude versus the US benchmark. When the discount is above \$20, oil producers will pay to haul crude up to five hours, more than twice as far as usually makes economic sense, Zielinski said.

However, the trucking industry's capacity to move more crude is limited by a severe driver shortage in Western Canada, said Andrew Barnes, director of compliance and regulatory affairs at Alberta Motor Transportation Association. This is not unique to Canada. Booming production in west Texas has strained pipeline capacity, increasing reliance on trucks to deliver to injection points. But ongoing pipeline construction in Texas should alleviate the glut in the next year, while Canada's future is less clear.

The uptick in truck transport also raises safety questions. There were 205 road accidents involving crude tanker trucks in Canada from 2010 through 2016, which killed 10 people, according to Transport Canada data. There were nine accidents involving crude trains, though one was the Lac Megantic, Quebec disaster in 2013, where a train hauling 72-crude cars derailed and exploded, killing 47.

Rail slow to return

When the Canadian oil discount hit a four-year high at \$31 in January, Alberta oil companies started calling Ceres Global Ag Corp, a grain and fertilizer handling facility on the Canada-U.S. border at Northgate, Saskatchewan. Desperate for access, companies were pushing Ceres to accelerate long-term plans to add crude hauling, starting with a C\$1 million (\$795 million) facility to transfer crude from trucks to rail and onto the BNSF system. "Every day they have fewer options of where to take it," said Ceres CEO Robert Day, who said his company is working to get to the point where they can load oil. "We're going to work real hard to make that happen in 2018." —Reuters



Singapore PM job mulled over for months

Singaporeans are not used to uncertainty when it comes to their future political leaders. Only one party has ruled the island-state since its independence more than 50 years ago, and there have been only three prime ministers. When founding father Lee Kuan Yew handed over the reins to cabinet colleague Goh Chok Tong, who in turn gave way to Lee's son and current prime minister Lee Hsien Loong, the changes were fixed long in advance.

But with Lee Hsien Loong making it clear he is ready to stand down in the next couple of years, no obvious successor has yet emerged from a group of 16 ministers tasked with picking a leader from within their ranks to take Singapore into a new era. The protracted process, portrayed as an experiment in democracy in the ruling People's Action Party (PAP), has already caused a rare disagreement between the current and former prime ministers, and raised questions about whether there is enough time to groom a capable successor.

The uncertainty comes at a time when Singapore is facing some major challenges if it is to remain as vibrant and prosperous in the future as it is today. Among the issues is the impact of a rapidly ageing population on the island state's finances, the increasing competition it faces for its traditional business strengths - such as its thriving port - and how to handle the growing dominance of China in the region as both an economic and political power.

Eugene Tan, an academic and former nominated member of the Singapore parliament, told Reuters there appeared to be a "delay" in picking a new leader because of a "lack of consensus". He added that it was not clear whether this lack of consensus was within the group of ministers or because Lee Hsien Loong has decided more time is needed for his successor to be identified. PM Lee told reporters at a press conference in London on Friday: "I'm quite confident that gradually they (the group of ministers) are beginning to have a sense of one another and who they would like to have to lead them."

Lee has previously said he will not appoint any new deputy prime ministers in a cabinet reshuffle due this week, suggesting that there is unlikely to be much of a hint about succession in the announcement. Spokespeople for the PAP did not respond to multiple requests for comment from Reuters for this story. The Prime Minister's Office declined

comment, saying it was a matter for the party and not the government. Little information has been released about how the 16 ministers are going about their task.

Behind closed doors

The process of selecting the leader within the PAP - which has governed Singapore since its split from Malaysia in 1965 and has never seen its support drop below 60 percent in an election - has always been opaque. Reports from the Straits Times newspaper, which is often seen as close to the government and the PAP, indicate that previous succession decisions were made swiftly and well ahead of any handover.



Post was once decided over cake and coffee

The decision to pick Goh, the successor to Lee Kuan Yew, was "made over coffee, orange juice and chocolate cake" by a group of party leaders some six years before he took office in 1990, the newspaper said in an article in January. Picking Lee Hsien Loong appeared even easier - made "over lunch" in 1990 - some 14 years before he became prime minister in 2004, it added. This time, the decision to find a replacement for 66-year-old Lee Hsien Loong has been put in the hands of the so-called "fourth generation" of 16 leaders - all ministers but some not yet in the cabinet.

PM Lee has previously said he does not think any of his four children will enter politics. "One of the criticisms from the outside of Singapore is that it is too familial, that the Lee family had too much of an impact. Now, there's

nobody obvious to succeed him, so that's good," said Peter Schwartz, a distinguished international fellow at the Centre for Strategic Futures in the Singapore prime minister's office.

The long process has led to the disagreement with former premier Goh. In a Facebook post in December, Goh called for Lee Hsien Loong's successor to be chosen by the group of ministers within six-to-nine months. Lee responded by saying Goh was "speaking from the privilege of watching things rather than being responsible to make it happen". In a joint statement in January, the fourth generation leaders said they were "keenly aware" of the "pressing issue" of succession and would pick a leader "in good time".

Lack of business experience

While Singapore media and political analysts have picked three candidates as possible successors - Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat, Education Minister Ong Ye Kung and cabinet member Chan Chun Sing - the absence of a clear frontrunner has triggered debate. Straits Times Deputy Political Editor Elgin Toh wrote in January that PM Lee should consider leading the country beyond the age of 70 to allow for more time for a replacement to be groomed. Tan said it was "more likely than not" that Lee would lead the party in the next election, which must be held by early 2021. While the PAP received almost 70 percent of votes at the last election in 2015, some critics say signs of growing insularity of its political elite mean it is not immune to the risks of a public blowback at a future election. In his latest book "Singapore Incomplete", long-time critic of Singapore and professor at Hong Kong Baptist University Cheriau George, said one of the most worrying signs for the cabinet was its "failure to induct Singaporeans from the private sector".

He said the cabinet needs more than a few ministers who "have developed the instinct to respond creatively to economic crises". All three of the touted successors certainly appear cut from the same cloth. They are all ethnically Chinese men who went to the same high school, Raffles, and studied in British universities under government scholarships which contractually binds high-performing students to return to Singapore to work in the government. —Reuters

Ethiopian businesses disappointed by new PM's economic stance

Local business leaders at a banquet in Ethiopia's capital last week were hoping the new Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed would tell them he planned to loosen the state's grip on the economy. He took power on April 2 promising a "new political beginning". But four people who heard his dinner speech said he signalled he would stick with policies to keep the government's hand in sectors such as infrastructure, banking and telecoms.

Ethiopia has let foreign companies such as fashion chain H&M set up factories in a decade-long push to change the economic focus from agriculture exports, such as coffee, to manufacturing. Other sectors are also open to investors. Analysts say the government must free up the economy further to sustain annual growth rates it estimates averaged nearly 10 percent in the past decade and to create jobs. Anger over high unemployment fuelled violence over ethnic tensions that led to the resignation of Abiy's predecessor Hailemariam Desalegn in February. But those at the speech said Abiy did not outline plans to open up new sectors, a move which could also ease a shortage of foreign exchange. He said state spending on infrastructure, which has crowded out local companies, would continue. "Point blank, Abiy said that demanding the state be out of the business sector is not feasible," said a hotel owner who was at the dinner. He said Abiy was responding to the business leaders' requests. "The state will remain in the business sector."

Abiy named 10 new ministers to his cabinet on Thursday to clear a path for political reform. He told the new ministers to tackle graft and streamline bureaucracy. But he retained the rest of Hailemariam's 34-strong cabinet, including the finance minister. That is consistent with remaining a "developmental state", the term the four businessmen said Abiy used at the banquet. His office did not respond to requests

from Reuters for comment on his policies.

Economists describe a "developmental state" as one where the government is deeply involved in the economy. The philosophy was embraced by rebel-turned-statesman Meles Zenawi, who died in power in 2012. It continued under Hailemariam. "It's frustrating to see that for all Abiy's intentions to bring about changes in politics, that is not translating into the economic sector," said Tsedale Lemma, the editor of the Addis Standard news website.

'Moralistic tone'

Local businesses say they find it hard to compete against the state. The government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years building roads and railways to support the manufacturing expansion. Many of the projects are funded with foreign exchange. Some is borrowed domestically, depriving local businesses of loans to fund their own projects. It also depletes foreign exchange reserves that could be used to support other areas of the economy. This means it is hard for foreign businesses to send profits home and for local businesses to import.

Access to loans and hard currency is the "biggest headache" for businesses, Endalkachew Sime, secretary general of the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce said. The International Monetary Fund said foreign reserves at the end of the 2016/17 fiscal year stood at \$3.2 billion, less than the cost of two months of imports. The government does not regularly release foreign reserves figures. The hotel owner said Abiy had lectured the business leaders at the dinner with a "moralistic" tone for buying foreign cars during a foreign exchange shortage. Endalkachew said Abiy should listen to the participants with a "big open ear".

Factories opening up

State investment in infrastructure has been the largest driver of gross domestic product growth. Coffee is the biggest export, and over 70 percent of the population is employed in farming. Gold, sesame, qat and livestock are also major exports. Abiy looks set to continue Hailemariam's plan to shift away from agriculture to manufacturing, currently 8 percent of GDP. The government has already welcomed Chinese, Turkish, Indian and Western investors in factories

making textiles, garments, leather goods and processed agricultural products.

This has contributed to a sharp rise in foreign direct investment. The Ethiopia Investment Commission's spokesman said FDI was \$2.2 billion for the first half of the 2017/18 fiscal year, a 22 percent increase from the same period a year earlier. Other sectors have also had foreign participation. The government sold the tobacco company, National Tobacco Enterprise, to a Japanese tobacco company in December for \$434 million. Heineken and Diaigeo bought the 2 state-run breweries.

Unilever opened a factory producing soap and other products in 2016 and wants to expand. The government is also looking for partners in the sugar industry. In retail, foreign companies may not open their own branches although they can bid for contracts with state wholesalers. Sheraton, Hilton, Radisson, and Marriott have hotels in the capital. AccorHotels is planning to open three. Ethiopia has also said it would like to create a secondary local currency bond market, which could increase liquidity for local and foreign companies.

Shut out

Nevertheless, some of the big sectors are still closed. Ethio Telecom is one of Africa's few remaining telecoms monopolies and the state-owned Commercial Bank of Ethiopia the largest financial institution. Economists say industries growing in neighboring Kenya, such as technology start-ups, are stifled by red tape and low internet penetration. There is also no stock market. Alemayehu Geda, economics professor at Addis Ababa University, estimates the unemployment rate, while officially at 18 percent, is closer to 50 percent. Reducing it will be key for long-term stability in Ethiopia, he said.

"The prioritization by the government of the manufacturing sector is logical as it would create many jobs," said Michael Ghebru, Chief Executive of Belayab Foods and Franchise PLC, which opened the first of ten planned Pizza Hut restaurants in Ethiopia this month, the first major foreign franchise. "But there are other sectors that are bringing in a lot of revenue and employment as well so their challenges should also be put into consideration." —Reuters



A handout photo obtained from the European Space Agency shows a composite of images of the Sentinel-3 satellite, which is arguably the most comprehensive of all the Sentinel missions of Europe's Copernicus program. Carrying a suite of state-of-the-art instruments, it provides systematic measurements of Earth's oceans, land, ice and atmosphere to monitor and understand large-scale global dynamics and provide critical information for ocean and weather forecasting. European satellite Sentinel-3B will be launched from Russia tomorrow. — AFP

Celebrations as veteran Armenia...

Continued from Page 1

"I am leaving the post of the country's leader," pro-Moscow Sarkisian was quoted as saying in a statement by his office. "Nikol Pashinyan was right. I was wrong." Sarkisian implied that there were several ways to resolve the crisis and that he could have used force to break up protests but chose not to do it. "This is not in my nature," he added. Sarkisian quit after a number of serving and former soldiers joined the protests.

Armenians cheered the resignation, dancing, hugging each other and setting off fireworks. "The people won!" shouted supporters of Pashinyan as some people waved national flags and others tooted car horns, on the 11th day of demonstrations. Spontaneous street parties broke out as tens of thousands took to the streets. Many flocked to stores to buy wine and raise a toast to the country's future. "You have won, the proud citizens of Armenia!" Pashinyan, the 42-year-old leader of the Civil Contract Party, wrote on Facebook. "And no one will be able to take this victory away from you. I congratulate you, the victorious people."

First Vice Premier Karen Karapetyan has been appointed acting head of government. Sarkisian remained the country's top leader even after he transitioned to the post of prime minister following constitutional amendments approved in 2015, which transferred powers from the presidency to the premiership. Sarkisian, a shrewd former military officer, was first elected president of the impoverished, Moscow-allied country in 2008. He also held the office of prime minister from 2007 to 2008. After the 2008 presidential vote, 10 people died in clashes between police and supporters of the defeated opposition candidate. The

Kremlin said it was closely watching the political crisis in Armenia - which hosts a Russian military base - but would not interfere.

Sarkisian's peaceful departure after a decade in power has been hailed as unprecedented. "For the first time ever the people forced the head of state to resign," said 46-year-old Arman Sarkisian (no relation to Serzh Sarkisian). "This has never happened before. From now on those who will replace him will think twice before taking decisions." Gohar Badalyan, a 21-year-old student, added: "A new life is beginning today."

Sarkisian had earlier refused to go and on Sunday stormed out of televised talks with Pashinyan, accusing him of "blackmail". Over the past days, thousands of opposition supporters held rallies against Sarkisian, denouncing his failure to fight poverty, corruption and the influence of oligarchs. They blocked roads and marched arm-in-arm holding Armenian flags, with students and a group of serving soldiers joining the protests.

A number of uniformed former soldiers and veterans who fought in Nagorny Karabakh - a breakaway region seized by Armenian separatists after the collapse of the Soviet Union - also joined the demonstrations. Despite the festive mood, many in Armenia acknowledged yesterday that the country still faced huge uncertainty. Andranik Serobyan, a teacher, said the "hardest part is ahead". "Who will be the prime minister? Who will be the country's leader? We will have to live through all of this."

In Moscow, President Vladimir Putin's spokesman - who spoke to reporters before Sarkisian resigned - said that Russia was carefully watching events in Armenia, which has retained close ties to its former Soviet master. "We are very attentively observing what is happening in Armenia," President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, calling the South Caucasus country "extremely important" for Russia. Peskov dismissed a question on whether Russia would interfere in the crisis - which he called "exclusively an internal affair" - as "absolutely inappropriate." — AFP

Will and Kate return home...

Continued from Page 1

Queen Elizabeth II, William's father Prince Charles, and his brother Prince Harry were said to be delighted with the news. Prime Minister Theresa May led the messages of support saying: "My warmest congratulations to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the birth of their baby boy. I wish them great happiness for the future."

Kate, 36, was admitted early yesterday to St Mary's private Lindo Wing, where she had given birth to George and Charlotte. Royal fanatics, who had been camped outside the hospital wing for several days in anticipation, jumped for joy and popped open champagne. "We're going to celebrate with fish and chips!" said John Loughrey, who was wearing a Union Jack hat and clutching a plastic doll with a crown. Maria Scott, 46, a housewife from Newcastle in northeast England, has been in place for 15 days. "It's really important to show support because they need to know how much they are loved by the people," she told AFP. "We're very proud of our monarchy."

The baby was born on St George's Day, England's national day. Tony Appleton, a town-crier dressed in a flamboyant red uniform, announced the news from the steps of the hospital to a crowd of supporters and media. The birth was also announced on the display screen atop the 189-m BT Tower in London, with the message "It's a boy!" Meanwhile sailors and royal marines aboard HMS Albion lined up on the flight deck of the assault ship on operations in the Asia-Pacific region to spell out "boy!"

The baby boy is a sixth great-grandchild for Queen Elizabeth, who turned 92 on Saturday, and her husband Prince Philip. He will hold the title of prince after the Queen changed the rules in 2012 to ensure that all of William's children would be entitled to the style, not just his eldest son. As with their two other children, the royal couple did not know whether the baby was going to be a boy or a girl. Bookmakers have Arthur, Albert, Frederick, James and Philip as their favorites for the young prince's name.

The boy does not overtake Charlotte in the line of succession due to new laws agreed across the 16 Commonwealth realms where Queen Elizabeth is the head of state, including Canada, Australia and New Zealand. A night at the Lindo Wing costs £7,500 (\$10,500), including a delivery package and two-room suite, excluding consultants' fees. The birth was overseen by consultant obstetrician Guy Thorpe-Beeston, who is the surgeon gynaecologist to the royal household, and consultant gynaecologist Alan Farthing, the Queen's surgeon-gynaecologist. They were part of the trusted team who also delivered George and Charlotte. The duchess had suffered severe morning sickness during all three pregnancies.

William, who is destined to become king after Charles, and Kate met at St Andrews University in Scotland. They tied the knot at Westminster Abbey in London on April 29, 2011, in a ceremony watched by up to two billion people worldwide. The marriage helped breathe new life into Britain's monarchy after years of crisis. The Sun newspaper reported Sunday that Kate's sister Pippa Middleton, 34, is pregnant with her first child. The new royal baby's birth will be celebrated with a 41-gun salute in London's Hyde Park and The Tower of London will also fire 62 rounds. — AFP

Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:
+965 248 35 616 / 617
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
ads@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

START SAVING OFFERS

MX-GX1021WTZ Blender

400 Watts only

1 Ltr

2 mill attachment
1 speed
Stainless Steel Blades

NN-SM33HWKPO Microwave

25 Ltr

5 Power Level
Manual

MX-SS40BTZ Hand Blender

4 IN 1 Blender

1.2 L
Variable Speed
4 Blades

Panasonic

best
AL-YOUSIFI

Shop Online www.best.com.kw Free Delivery

1809 809

Sports

Boxing fights back in Nigeria after years down and out

Nigerian boxing collapsed due to lack of sponsorship

LAGOS: When Saleh Fawaz decided to organise his first boxing match in Lagos, he didn't expect more than 500 spectators. In the end, over 800 tickets were sold and he had to turn away dozens of fans at the door.

The stands were full, music pounded at full blast and the green and white Nigerian flag fluttered during the most eagerly awaited bouts. Fawaz, 31, is passionate about boxing and, in the space of two months, went from young oil industry entrepreneur to full-time professional boxing promoter.

"I started meeting with boxers and I realised at the same time that they don't have enough money to pay for their licence or even to feed themselves, or access to train," the young owner of the Saleh Gloves Promotions company told AFP.

"There are not enough events. What they really need is a stage to showcase their talent." As a result he decided to help them, buying equipment and even paying their 10,000-naira (\$28, 22.50-euro) licences to fight.

RISE AND FALL

Boxing used to be the most popular sport in Nigeria until the 1950s and 1960s but completely disappeared from view until the beginning of the 2000s. Michael Gennaro, a boxing historian at Bossier Parish Community College in the southern US state of Louisiana, said he was "shocked" when he flicked through local newspaper archives.

"Boxing was in the newspapers almost every day, kids had scrapbooks of their favourite boxers, and Nigeria had two world champions already in 1957 and 1962," he added. Hogan Bassey was featherweight champion of the world in 1957 while Dick Tiger was the middleweight title holder in 1962 and also held the light-heavyweight belt in 1966.

Boxing was popular across many former British colonies but Nigeria differed in its wealth of generous

local sponsors. The arrival of military governments from the late 1960s however brought an abrupt end to boxing's popularity as a succession of leaders saw no international prestige in it.

Tiger brought politics into the sport by preferring to represent secessionist Biafra, whose unilateral declaration of independence in 1969 sparked a 30-month civil war. "At the same time Muhammad Ali refused to enrol in the US Army to go to Vietnam, Dick Tiger became public enemy number one," said Gennaro.

"Boxing had the image of a revolutionary sport." Within a few years, Nigerian boxing had collapsed due to lack of sponsorship. "If there is no money, there is no reason for boxing," said Gennaro.

TV RESURGENCE

Everything changed because of Adewunmi Ogunson, the head of the satellite television platform Multichoice Nigeria. His GOtv channel has organised an annual "boxing night" since 2004, which is watched by millions across Africa.

The 2016 winner, Olaide "Fijaborn" Fijabi, took home a cheque for one million naira. The super-lightweight told media that before his victory he never wanted to turn professional because there were few opportunities to fight and no promotions.

But he added: "I hope to be a billionaire boxer, win the world title and be talked about the way great boxers are talked about. That is my aspiration." Jenkins Alumona, boxing promoter for Flykite Production, said popularising boxing again will lead to the discovery of Nigeria's next world champion.

Currently, there are some 300 professional boxers in Nigeria, added the former sports journalist. Cynthia, a 17-year-old from the poor Lagos suburb of Bariga, decided to give the sport a go after watching the televised bouts.

She now trains under the trees of a state-run school



LAGOS: File photo shows Kenya's Michael Nyawade (L), popularly called 'Shaka Michael', competes against Nigeria's Waheed Usman during a GOtv featherweight title fight at the sport hall National Stadium in Lagos, on April 15, 2018. — AFP

at weekends with the help of her coach, Always Kazeem, a former barber turned professional trainer. "I want to become a champion. I want to become rich and, by God's grace, I know I will make it," said Cynthia, with a look as determined as her right hook. "Boxing already changed a lot of things in my life. I went to places where I thought I would never go, like Elite Box in Victoria Island for example."

WEALTH OF TALENT

The wealthy Lagos suburb of Victoria Island is only a dozen or so kilometres (miles) from the teeming crowds on the mean streets of Bariga. But in a country of more than 180 million, where the gap between rich and poor is among the widest in the world, it might as well be light years.

Rehia Osagie, who founded the Elite Box club two years ago for the city's monied upper classes, has also

opened it up to professionals who don't have equipment to train.

"There is talent in this country and we are kind of working our way back (to where boxing was) but it's very tough to make a living from it," he said. "At the moment, the main people who are being successful are actually the ones who leave the country."

Top British boxer Anthony Joshua is said to have wanted to represent Nigeria—where his parents are from—at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. But the Nigerian federation turned him down because he was late for qualification.

At the London Games in 2012, he became super-heavyweight champion. In March, Joshua—who in recent fights has arrived in the ring flying the Union Jack and the Nigerian flag—beat New Zealand's Joseph Parker to unify the WBA, IBF, WBO and IBO heavyweight titles. — AFP

India tennis star Mirza announces pregnancy

NEW DELHI: Grand Slam-winning Indian tennis star Sania Mirza yesterday announced she is pregnant, describing herself as "ecstatic" but giving no indication whether she would retire from the sport.

Mirza and her husband, former Pakistan cricket captain Shoaib Malik, posted a picture on their Twitter accounts of a baby vest and a feeding bottle between two T-shirts bearing their names.

It was accompanied by the hashtag #BabyMirzaMalik. Bollywood actor Aamir Khan tweeted back his "congratulations".

The baby is due in October, the tennis star's father and coach Imran Mirza told the Press Trust of India news agency. "We are soon to become parents," Sania Mirza said in a statement released by a family friend.

"Having thought about it for a while, we both felt right now is the correct time to start a family. When we found out, we were ecstatic and couldn't wait to give out this news to our fans and well-wishers."

"We are very excited to enter this new phase of our lives and look forward to our journey as parents," she added. The three-time Grand Slam doubles winner had said earlier this month that any child she had would bear the Mirza-Malik surname and that Shoaib wanted a daughter.

The 31-year-old has been sidelined since October with a knee injury. She has slipped from number one in the world doubles ranking—the first for an Indian woman—to 24. She said at the start of the year that she wanted to return for the French Open in May.

Mirza has won at least one medal at every Asian Games since 2006 and had also expressed hope of competing in this year's event in Indonesia in August. Mirza in 2005 became the first Indian to win a WTA tournament singles title. She reached the fourth round of the US



Sania Mirza

Open in the same year, and by 2007 was among the women's top 30.

But a wrist injury ended her singles dream and she focused on doubles tennis. A partnership with Swiss great Martina Hingis produced three Grand Slam titles. — AFP

Pakistan hockey hero seeks heart transplant in India

KARACHI: Pakistan's World Cup winning field hockey goalkeeper Mansoor Ahmed yesterday reached out to India for help in securing a heart transplant—despite years of breaking his rivals' "hearts on the field".

The 49-year-old has been suffering for weeks from complications stemming from a pacemaker and stents implanted in his heart. Ahmed has been a sporting icon in Pakistan since helping the country win the 1994 World Cup in Sydney with his penalty stroke push against the Netherlands in the final.

"I may have broken a lot of Indian hearts on the field of play by beating India in the Indira Gandhi Cup (1989) and in other events but that was sport," Ahmed told AFP. "Now I need

a heart transplant in India and for that I need support from the Indian government."

India-Pakistan ties, including sports and cultural contacts, plummeted after the 2008 militant attacks in Mumbai, which New Delhi blamed on Pakistani militant groups. Despite the strained ties, Pakistanis are eligible to apply for medical visas to India, renowned for its booming medical tourism industry. Ahmed—who played 338 international matches, participated in three Olympics and various other high-profile events in a career spanning from 1986 to 2000 — said the visa could be a lifesaver.

"Humanity is paramount and I too would be obliged if I get a visa and other help in India," said Ahmed. Sport has been one of the few avenues to improve relations between the arch rivals, he added. "We have had a great rivalry and sports have helped on a number of occasions so that should continue," said Ahmed. India has suspended most bilateral sporting ties with Pakistan since 2008, with high-profile cricket tours bearing the brunt of the moratorium.

They have, however, continued to play each other in multinational

TOYOTA GAZOO racing ready for new challenge

TOKYO: TOYOTA GAZOO Racing will push the boundaries of hybrid electric vehicles when it takes on the challenge of the 2018-19 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) with an evolution of its TS050 HYBRID race car.

After a successful pre-season programme which included 21,000 km of running over four three-day tests, the team presented its 2018-19 car at Paul Ricard prior to the first WEC event of the season The 2018 TS050 HYBRID will take on the challenge of an eight-race WEC season with the clear target to finally overcome the challenge of the Le Mans 24 Hours, which has so far eluded TOYOTA. TOYOTA GAZOO Racing enthusiastically welcomes the challenge of proving the efficiency and performance of its hybrid electric powertrain in such tough conditions as part of TOYOTA's mission to make ever-better road cars.

That mission was highlighted by the GR Super Sport Concept, unveiled earlier this year. The concept car, which has been track tested, incorporates technology developed through the WEC project and is composed of many parts taken directly from the TS050 HYBRID, including the 1,000 hp hybrid electric power-



train and lean burn engine.

The TS050 HYBRID has already set new performance and efficiency standards, with last year's fastest-ever Le Mans lap achieved using 35% less fuel compared to the team's 2012 WEC debut. Advancements in powertrain technology contribute to race performance and production car technology. Kinetic energy recovery is a key factor in achieving those improvements, with energy generated under braking harvested by powerful motor/generators on both axles and converted into electrical energy, which is deployed under acceleration to save fuel and deliver performance.

That is the same principal which has seen TOYOTA establish itself as the world leader in

hybrid electric road cars, selling more than 11 million to date. As part of continuing efforts to develop people as well as technology, road car engineers from Higashi-Fuji Technical Centre will again join the team to enhance their skills.

The 1,000 hp hybrid electric powertrain has been modified to strengthen reliability but elsewhere the car is largely the same as that which ended the 2017 season with three consecutive victories. Having ended last season as the fastest car, TOYOTA GAZOO Racing's goal is to finally defeat the unpredictable and arduous Le Mans 24 Hours as it fights for the WEC titles. That challenge begins at Spa-Francorchamps in Belgium on 5 May and concludes eight races later at Le Mans on 15-16 June 2019.

Marquez wins in Texas for sixth year in a row

AUSTIN: Honda's reigning MotoGP world champion Marc Marquez ran away with the Grand Prix of the Americas for the sixth year in a row on Sunday to take his first victory of the season in dominant fashion.

The 25-year-old Spaniard was handed a three-place grid penalty in qualifying and started fourth, but seized the lead on the opening lap before disappearing into the distance at Austin's Circuit of the Americas (COTA).

It was the four-times MotoGP champion's 10th successive win in the United States in the top category, with the others coming at Laguna Seca and Indianapolis. "My strategy was just start, push and that's it," said Marquez, who shrugged off boos from the crowd reacting to a champion whose on-track clashes with rivals have been a talking point of the season.

"I didn't have confidence to battle so

I was pushing from the beginning and just go away, open the gap...in Spain they will be happy." Maverick Vinales, who started on pole for Yamaha, finished second and 3.560 seconds behind his compatriot while Italian Andrea Iannone was third in his first podium with Suzuki.

Andrea Dovizioso finished fifth for Ducati and regained the championship lead with 46 points after three races, the Italian now one clear of Marquez with Vinales third on 41.

Britain's Cal Crutchlow, who had led the standings after winning in Argentina, crashed his LCR Honda with 12 laps to go and failed to score after rejoining in 22nd place and finishing 19th.

Marquez had a lonely race, challenged only briefly by Iannone before pulling clear to live up to his fame as "King of COTA", and that will have come as a relief for both him and Honda. He had been nearly eight seconds clear with a lap to go before easing up at the end.

"It's quite noisy, eh? But it's funny. Don't worry," he said of the crowd's reaction. In Argentina, he and Italian great Valentino Rossi collided with the Yamaha rider accusing the champion of "destroying" MotoGP by what he considered dangerous behaviour on track. — Reuters

Sports

Giants' Brandon Belt sets MLB record with 21-pitch at bat

Grandal hits two-run double to give Los Angeles series victory

ANAHEIM: Brandon Belt had a home run and two singles, and Johnny Cueto threw six scoreless innings to propel San Francisco past Los Angeles, but Belt had another at-bat in the game that was just as significant as any of the hits, even though he made an out. In the first inning, Belt battled through a 21-pitch plate appearance against Angels starter Jaime Barria, ultimately lining out to right field. The 21 pitches in a single at-bat were the most since records have been kept in 1988, passing the mark of 20 set by Houston Astros infielder Ricky Gutierrez against Indians pitcher Bartolo Colon in June 1998. Cueto (2-0) took a no-hitter into the sixth inning, and he wound up allowing two hits, two walks and two hit batters while striking out seven. One of the hit batters was Angels shortstop Andrelton Simmons, who had to leave the game due to a right forearm contusion. Simmons is listed as day-to-day.

CUBS 9, ROCKIES 7

Javier Baez homered, starter Jose Quintana reached a career milestone, and visiting Chicago overcame a major injury scare to Kris Bryant to beat Colorado. Bryant was hit in the helmet on a 96 mph pitch from Rockies starter German Marquez in the first inning. He appeared groggy and walked to the clubhouse with the help of the training staff, but the Cubs later released a statement saying Bryant had passed all tests and there were no signs of a concussion. After Bryant was replaced by David Bote, the Cubs had four consecutive singles to take a 3-0 lead. Baez hit his seventh homer in the second and Jason Heyward had a two-run single in the third to give Chicago a 6-0 lead.



Oakland wins for sixth time in seven games

DODGERS 4, NATIONALS 3
Yasmani Grandal hit a two-run double, and Corey Seager's sacrifice fly in the seventh inning completed a late rally that gave Los Angeles a series victory over visiting Washington. Dodgers closer Kenley Jansen gave up a pair of singles to start the ninth inning, then retired three consecutive batters to end it, getting former teammate Howie Kendrick on a fly ball to the edge of the warning track for the final out. It was Jansen's third save of the season and second in two days. Washington led 3-0 before Grandal's two-run hit to right in the sixth. Cody Bellinger followed with a game-tying double off the wall in center field.

ASTROS 7, WHITE SOX 1

Jake Marisnick snapped an 0-for-22 slump with a leadoff single that ignited a five-run seventh inning as Houston completed a three-game sweep of host Chicago and extended its winning streak to six games. The White Sox have dropped seven straight. Chicago (4-14) is off to its worst start since 1968. Astros right-hander Lance McCullers Jr. (3-1) lacked his best stuff yet proved elusive enough to log six innings of one-run ball. McCullers entered leading the majors averaging 14.57 strikeouts per nine

innings but finished with just three while allowing eight hits and plunking a pair of batters. Marisnick had posted 13 strikeouts in his previous 19 plate appearances before opening the seventh with a soft line drive to center field off White Sox right-hander Aaron Bummer. Bruce Rondon entered in relief of Bummer (0-1) but failed to stem the tide, issuing walks to George Springer and Carlos Correa while allowing run-scoring singles to Jose Altuve and Alex Bregman.

PHILLIES 3, PIRATES 2 (11 INNINGS)

Aaron Altherr singled with one out in the bottom of the 11th inning as host Philadelphia completed a four-game sweep of Pittsburgh, its first against the Pirates since May 12-15, 1994. Philadelphia also improved to 9-1 at Citizens Bank Park, its best start at home since also going 9-1 at Connie Mack Stadium in 1964. After stranding two in the 10th, the Phillies put together the winning rally. Andrew Knapp nearly hit a game-ending homer off Richard Rodriguez (0-1). Knapp settled for a



ANAHEIM: With Buster Posey #28 of the San Francisco Giants behind the plate, Shohei Ohtani #17 of the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim strikes out in the fourth inning of the game at Angel Stadium on Sunday in Anaheim, California. — AFP

triple when his fly ball caromed off the top of the left field wall in front of the metal gate between the seats and the fence. The umpires reviewed the play and confirmed the triple. Five pitches later, Altherr won it by slapping a 1-2 slider from Rodriguez at 110 mph off the bat into left field, capping a 3-for-3 day. Altherr entered the game in the seventh in a double switch and collected his 10th career three-hit game.

AS 4, RED SOX 1

Oakland couldn't hold visiting Boston hitless for a second straight day, but the Athletics kept the Red Sox out of the win column again. Khris Davis hit a go-ahead, three-run homer in the eighth off Boston starter David Price and finished with four RBIs as the Athletics beat the Red Sox in the finale of a three-game series. Oakland won for the sixth time in seven games. After going hitless Saturday, the Red Sox notched a hit in the game's first at-bat as Jackie Bradley Jr. laced a leadoff single to right field.

DIAMONDBACKS 4, PADRES 2

Nick Ahmed hit a two-run homer in a four-run fourth inning and Patrick Corbin became the fourth four-game

winner in the majors with Arizona's victory over visiting San Diego. Ahmed's homer, his third of the season, made it a 3-0 lead, and Corbin's two-out single drove in the final run of the inning as the Diamondbacks (15-6) tied a franchise record for the best 21-game start to a season. Arizona is the first team since the 2003 San Francisco Giants to win its first seven series. Christian Villanueva broke up Corbin's shutout with a two-run homer in the sixth inning as the Padres lost for the fifth time in six games.

RAYS 8, TWINS 6

Carlos Gomez hit a two-run, walk-off homer with no outs in the bottom of the ninth inning, and Adeiny Hechavarría and C.J. Cron also homered in Tampa Bay's win over visiting Minnesota. Cron singled to lead off the ninth against Addison Reed (0-1) and was replaced by pinch runner Rob Refsnyder before Gomez hit the first pitch he saw for his third homer of the season as the Rays completed their first home sweep of Minnesota in franchise history. Daniel Robertson had four hits, Jesus Sucre had three and Joey Wendle had two for the Rays, who have won four in a row. They hit six homers and scored 26 runs in their sweep of the Twins. — Reuters

KIB sponsors Night Run event

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored the Night Run event, the first-of-its-kind run held in Kuwait. The run was organized by the Kuwait Banking Association in cooperation with Pro-Vision, one of the leading companies in the region that specializes in the management and consultancy of sports events. The event witnessed the participation of a large number of both female and male participants who ran for a total 5 km around Al Murooj Complex.

Speaking about this sponsorship, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, Nawaf Najia, said: "KIB is committed to its social responsibility strategy that promotes the health and well-being of all at all fitness levels. For this reason, we participate in sports-related events to encourage everyone to take part in health-enhancing physical activity and pursue a healthy lifestyle."

Najia added that KIB actively seeks to



support community-based sports initiatives and activities, as well as sponsor local athletes. The Bank's sponsorship of this event reflects its ongoing belief in the importance of sports and its positive impact on the wider community, boosting productivity and

enabling everyone to better serve the nation.

It is worth noting that, as part of its leading social responsibility program, KIB strives to participate in events and activities that support all segments of the local community, with a key focus on sports and health.

Pioneer for the globalised game, Wenger exit marks end of an era

LONDON: Arsene Wenger's legacy after 22 years as Arsenal manager will largely be judged by how he leaves the Gunners on and off the pitch, but his considerable contribution to making the Premier League the global phenomenon it is today should not be forgotten. Wenger, 68, finally announced he will step aside at the end of the season on Friday, under increasing pressure from the club's supporters to go as year-on-year Arsenal fell further behind their rivals at the top end of the Premier League.

It is 14 years since the high point of Wenger's reign when he led "The Invincibles" to an unbeaten league season and the final of his three Premier League titles.

A run of qualifying for the Champions League 19 years in a row was ended last season and a second consecutive campaign without Arsenal can end Wenger's reign on a high by winning the Europa League next month.

The Frenchman admitted it was the sight of Arsenal's fans calling for his head and vast swathes of empty seats at recent home games that finally forced his decision to leave. "The fans did not give me the image of unity I want all over the world and that was hurtful because I think the club is respected," he said on Sunday.

But in many ways Wenger has proved to be a victim of his own success. During a glorious first decade at Arsenal, he went head-to-head with another departed Premier League legend in Alex Ferguson's great Manchester United teams.

Their rivalry sprinkled with equal share of bad blood and brilliant football, sparked the phenomenal growth of the English game around the world that made it so attractive to the likes of Chelsea's Russian oligarch owner Roman Abramovich or Abu-Dhabi's Sheikh Mansour, who has poured billions into newly crowned Premier League champions Manchester City. "I am touched by all the praise I got from English football and I'm grateful for having that experience in this country," added Wenger. "That is for me special, where the football is special, where the passion is special, you see that nowhere else and I know I will not get that anymore in my life."

"I could see the development of the Premier League in 20 years that is absolutely sensa-

tional and I hope that continues for a very long time." When Wenger's side were at their peak in 2004, they were eliminated by Chelsea in the first year of the Abramovich era in the quarter-finals of the Champions League.

The Russian then poured more millions into assembling a squad that would enjoy their own period of dominance under another Wenger foe in Jose Mourinho. After Chelsea, came City to help dislodge Arsenal from the Premier League's established top four and even poach a number of players Wenger had developed with the promise of bigger wages.

Wenger himself was a pioneer for the globalisation of the game. Gone are the days when a young French manager getting a top job in England would cause much fuss. But his arrival from Japan's Grampus Eight in 1996 sparked "Arsene who?" headlines.

His practices from changing diets to signing promising young players from abroad to nurture into stars were so successful they were quickly copied. As he said himself on Sunday, he established Arsenal as a "well-respected" club around the world and has sacrificed himself to save that image from being tarnished.

A man who confessed to having worked "seven days a week for 22 years" is unlikely to head straight into retirement given his love for the game. But, whilst Wenger's coaching career may not be done, his departure marks the end of an era for the Premier League. — AFP

Pyeongchang 'raised the bar' for Tokyo 2020

TOKYO: A successful Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang has "raised the bar" for Tokyo 2020, the International Olympic Committee said yesterday, warning organisers to brace for difficult questions and criticism as the Games approach.

IOC coordination commission chairman John Coates paid tribute to a "very, very successful" Games in South Korea as he started two days of meetings with Tokyo 2020 officials.

"The bar has been raised for you," said Coates as he recalled the "fantastic sporting achievement" and "historic moments with the two Koreas walking together".

With around two-and-a-half years until the Tokyo Olympics, Coates advised organisers that their preparation would come under increasing scrutiny. Tokyo came under fire from some quarters at a recent meeting of top sporting

officials, who raised some "very pertinent questions", Coates said. According to specialist outlet Inside the Games, around 10 world governing body representatives raised concerns over different aspects of the Games preparations at the meeting in Bangkok.

"You have to be prepared to answer these questions when they are raised and if you don't, these are the sorts of things that can impact the confidence of our stakeholders in your ability to host the Games," warned Coates. "That's very hard to come back from when that momentum starts to build... when these questions come, they have to be answered," stressed the Australian. After a difficult start-with budgetary problems and a series of PR disasters-Tokyo 2020 organisers say they have wrestled the Games back on track.

"Everything is going very smoothly and I can clearly say that most of the competition venues are on track and they will be completed as scheduled," said Tokyo 2020 chief executive officer Toshiro Muto in a recent news conference. Organising committee president Yoshiro Mori said Monday that "budget reduction is the highest priority action for us," after fury over the high price tag of the Games. —AFP

Afghan star Rashid Khan picked for World XI T20

LONDON: Afghanistan's mesmerising leg spinner Rashid Khan will play for a World XI in the one-off Twenty20 clash with West Indies at Lord's to raise funds for stadiums damaged by last year's hurricanes in the Caribbean.

The 19-year-old-who is ranked number one in the International Cricket Council (ICC) T20 bowling rankings-said he was honoured to be selected for the match on May 31 against a side who had contributed so much to the sport. "It is a matter of

great honour and pride for me and my country that I have been chosen to support one of cricket's oldest and most loyal members," he said in a statement.

"I don't think it will be incorrect to say that a number of cricketers from this and previous generations were inspired and attracted to cricket due to the heroics of the West Indies sides of the 70s, 80s and 90s. "And if the West Indies are now looking upon us for help, then there shouldn't be a hesitation for even a second."

Rashid, who will also play for Sussex in this season's T20 competition, will be captained by England's limited overs skipper Eoin Morgan. The team will also have Pakistan duo Shahid Afridi and Shoaib Malik, Sri Lanka's Thisara Perera and Bangladesh pair all-rounder Shakib-al-Hasan and opening batsman Tamim Iqbal. — AFP

Sports

Amazing Salah steals show again with goal and award

Elneny World Cup dreams are over

PARIS: Mohamed Salah continued to steal the limelight among Africans in Europe at the weekend, scoring a record-equalling goal and being voted Players' Player of the Year. The Liverpool and Egypt sharpshooter got his 31st English Premier League goal in a 2-2 draw at West Bromwich Albion before his goal-littered season was rewarded with the award. Another joyful weekend for Salah contrasted with that of fellow Egyptian Mohamed Elneny, who injured his ankle as Arsenal beat West Ham 4-1 and could miss the World Cup.

ENGLAND MOHAMED SALAH (Liverpool)

Salah was chosen as the Premier League Players' Player of the Year on Sunday as reward for his 41 goals in all competitions in an incredible debut season at Anfield. He took his Premier League tally to 31 with Liverpool's second in a draw at West Brom to equal the record for goals in a single 38-game season.

MOHAMED ELNENY (Arsenal)

Elneny faces a nervous wait to see if his World Cup dreams are over after being stretched off in the first half of Arsenal's win over West Ham. Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger admitted Elneny's ankle injury "doesn't look good" and he left the field with his shirt covering his face which was anguished in pain.

VICTOR MOSES (Chelsea)

The Nigeria wing-back will get the chance for FA Cup redemption after helping Chelsea reach the final with a 2-0 win over Southampton. Moses played all 90 minutes as the Blues eased into a final showdown with Manchester United on May 19. Goals from Olivier Giroud and Alvaro Morata killed off Southampton, leaving Moses dreaming of making amends for last season when he was sent off for two bookings as Chelsea lost 2-1 to Arsenal in the final.

SPAIN YOUSSEF EN-NESYRI (Malaga)

The young Moroccan striker netted his team's sec-

ond goal in their 2-0 win over Real Sociedad. The victory was a case of too little, too late for Malaga, though, after their relegation was confirmed last week.

IMOH EZEKIEL/OGHENEKARO ETEBO (Las Palmas)

The Nigerian duo started for Las Palmas against Alaves but could not prevent the side from the Canary Island of Gran Canaria slumping to a 4-0 home defeat that condemned them to relegation with four games of the season remaining.

Koulibaly was the toast of Napoli fans

ITALY KALIDOU KOULIBALY (Napoli)

Senegal defender Koulibaly was the toast of Napoli fans after his 90th-minute header sealed a 1-0 win at Juventus and blew the Serie A championship open with four games to play. "It's the most important goal of my life because winning here was an impossible mission," he said after his fifth league goal. Koulibaly headed in the winner off a Jose Callejon corner in the final minute to give Napoli their first victory at the Allianz Stadium.

SIMY NWANKWO (Crotone)

Nigerian forward Simy grabbed the equaliser after seven minutes for his third goal in four games as Crotone battled back to a 2-1 victory at Udinese to shake up the relegation race. Crotone are two points above the drop zone with the win condemning Benevento to relegation.

FRANCK KESSIE (AC Milan)

Ivorian midfielder Kessie came closest to an equaliser on the hour mark when he rattled the crossbar in the San Siro, but AC Milan dropped out of the Europa League places into seventh after an embarrassing 1-0 defeat to rock-bottom Benevento, becoming the only team to fail to beat the southerners over two games this season.

GERMANY NABY KEITA (RB Leipzig)

The Liverpool-bound Guinea midfielder hit his sixth



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's Dutch defender Virgil van Dijk (R) and Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah attends a training session at the team's Melwood training complex in Liverpool, north west England, yesterday. —AFP

league goal this season after a rare moment of luck in a 5-2 defeat at home to Hoffenheim. With his team 3-0 down and playing with 10 men after Emil Forsberg was sent off, Leipzig got a lucky break when Keita's shot hit the post and went in off the goalkeeper. The defeat saw Leipzig slide to sixth in Germany's top flight while Hoffenheim leap-frogged them into fifth.

SALOMON KALOU (Hertha Berlin)

The veteran Ivory Coast striker was in goal-providing form in a 3-0 win at 10-man Eintracht Frankfurt. Kalou helped unlock the Frankfurt defence and set up Australia international Mathew Leckie and Alexander Esswein for second-half goals. The result leaves Hertha ninth while Frankfurt are seventh.

FRANCE

face in Mohamed Salah, but it is the Egyptian who poses the biggest threat to their dream of returning to the final for the first time since they lost to Liverpool on home soil in 1984.

Salah made the move from the Italian capital to Anfield just 10 months ago, and has surpassed all expectations since with an incredible 41 goals in 46 Liverpool appearances to already net more times than he did in two years for Roma.

The 25-year-old was rewarded for his brilliant campaign by winning the Premier League's Players' Player of the Year award on Sunday evening, beating off stiff competition from Manchester City's Kevin de Bruyne to the prize. "I'm really happy for him, really proud of that, it is a fantastic achievement. I think if all the other players vote for you it means most to all players," added Klopp. "In a season like this, when Kevin de Bruyne played a season like he did, it made it even more special."

START OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

Despite their rich heritage in the competition as five-time winners, Liverpool haven't been in the last four of the Champions League for a decade. And captain Jordan Henderson believes this season's run to the semis can be the start of something special under Klopp. "Hopefully this is the start of something special with this squad," said the England international.

"The manager has been brilliant since he has come

MAXWEL CORNET (Lyon)

The Ivory Coast forward played his part in another big win for Lyon by coming off the bench to set up Burkina Faso star Bertrand Traore for one goal and then net another himself as OL beat Dijon 5-2 away in Ligue 1 to stay on course for Champions League qualification.

SEYDOU SY (Monaco)

Monaco were without both first-choice goalkeeper Danijel Subasic and his habitual back-up Diego Benaglio for their trip to Guingamp, so Sy came in for his second start of the campaign. The 22-year-old Senegal-born custodian could not prevent his side who played most of the game with 10 men from losing 3-1, a defeat that jeopardises their chances of Champions League qualification, even if they remain second in the table for now. —AFP

Roma signs shirt sponsorship deal with Qatar Airways

DOHA: Italian club and Champions League semi-finalists Roma announced yesterday their new shirt sponsors will be Qatar Airways in a three-year deal, described as the largest the club has ever signed.

The deal was made public just a day before one of Roma's biggest games for decades, the first leg of a Champions League semi-final against Liverpool at Anfield today.

The team's shirts, which will be their second-choice colours of white, will carry the sponsorship for the first time in that match. "We are delighted to announce this historic partnership between AS Roma and Qatar Airways, two great brands with global ambitions," said Roma's president Jim Pallotta.

"Today's announcement is the result of discussions behind the scenes for more than eight months with Qatar Airways... and comes at a significant time in the club's history, on and off the pitch.

"With a new stadium due to begin construction late this year and the team in the Champions League semi-final for the first time for 34 years, it's an exciting time to be a Roma fan. He added that the club, third in Serie A, would "be proud to wear the Qatar Airways name on our shirts".

The deal will last until the end of the 2020-21 season, both parties announced. Qatar Airways' boss, Akbar Al-Baker, said: "We are very pleased to announce this new partnership, which will see Qatar Airways become the official shirt sponsor of AS Roma through the 2020-21 season.

"AS Roma is one of the most successful and well-known football clubs in the world." It is the first shirt sponsor Roma has had since 2012. However, the deal is just the latest in an increasing line of sporting sponsorships announced by the state-owned Gulf airline. Qatar Airways was the shirt sponsor for Barcelona—the team Roma knocked out in this year's Champions League quarter-finals—for three years, in a commercial agreement which ended in 2017.

That deal proved controversial among some Barcelona supporters because of Qatar's human rights record, particularly with regards to migrant labourers helping prepare for the 2022 World Cup in Doha. Qatar Airways has also been criticised for its treatment of workers, notably by the International Labour Organisation for "discrimination" against female staff. The airline is also one of the shirt sleeve sponsors on Bayern Munich's kit as well as the German giant's official airline.

Roma and Bayern could meet each other in this year's Champions League final, as the Germans play holders Real Madrid in the other last four match. Qatar Airways also sponsors local club Al Sadd, whose captain is former Barcelona legend Xavi Hernandez, and will be a FIFA sponsor of the 2022 Qatar World Cup. —AFP

Klopp calls for Roma respect amid Anfield cauldron

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp warned the club's fans not to repeat the scenes that saw windows of Manchester City's team bus smashed by thrown cans and bottles ahead of their Champions League semi-final, first leg against Roma at Anfield today. City became just the latest victims of a famous European night at Anfield on the pitch three weeks ago as Liverpool raced into a 3-0 first leg lead that laid the foundations for their 5-1 aggregate victory over the English champions in the quarter-finals.

However, Klopp wants to retain the passion inside the stadium without the ugly scenes outside which are the subject of a UEFA investigation. "In the stadium do it again and better. Outside the stadium, please show the respect we have to show," said Klopp yesterday. "This is such an outstanding football club, an outstanding football family, known for fantastic atmospheres all over the world, so we don't need to throw whatever at the bus of the opposing team.

The Italians will be greeted by at least one familiar

UEFA Champions League semi-finals live on beIN

DOHA: There are only four teams left standing in the UEFA Champions League. Bayern Munich, Real Madrid, Liverpool and Roma are all looking to book their spots in the final of club football's most prestigious competition.

beIN will have you covered from all angles all the way through to the final in Kiev. The action begins tonight with the first leg semi-final clash between Liverpool and Roma.

Tune in to beIN SPORTS HD11 at 21:00 Mecca time and join presenter Angus Scott and his guest John Arne Riise who joins the beIN SPORTS Champions League studios for the first time.

If you prefer your coverage in Arabic, French, or Spanish, you can also tune in to beIN SPORTS HD1, HD15 and HD17 respectively.

Tomorrow night, the attention shifts to Germany as Bayern Munich host Real Madrid. The clash between the two European powerhouses will also be available in four languages on beIN, with English studio coverage beginning at 21:00 Mecca time on beIN SPORTS HD11. If you miss a goal or key moment in any of those matches, you can follow beIN's social media platforms to bring you up to speed with all the very



latest. That includes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, as well as the main website and mobile application.

If you're a football fan then look nowhere else but beIN. Visit beIN.net/subscribe and pick one of many

available packages where you can follow all the best action throughout the year. Make sure you don't miss beIN's mega offer. Subscribe to the Complete package and get the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia(tm) for free! For more information, visit beIN.net/worldcup



Matches on TV (Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE	
Liverpool v Roma	21:45
beIN SPORTS HD 1	

Sports

The 'Neymar dream' is back in Kuwait for the third consecutive year



Neymar Jr. recently launched the third edition of his signature five-a-side tournament and spoke about his own hopes and dreams. Neymar Jr's Five made an instant impact in its debut year in 2016, with more than 10,000 teams and 65,000 players in 47 countries, including Kuwait, vying for overall victory in the world's biggest five-a-side football tournament. This time it will be bigger than ever, with regional qualifiers in more than 60 countries and over 28,000 teams competing.

Barcelona's famous star and Brazilian professional footballer Neymar Junior provides a unique opportunity to thousands of footballers to participate in the national qualifiers kicking off end of the month. Neymar, who was also announced the best football

player of the year in 2015, invites all players aged 16 to 25 to form a team of five and join the championship.

After the enormous success and global growth 2017, Kuwait will re-host 5 national qualifiers of Neymar Jr's Five. The qualifiers in Kuwait will occur over a span of five days: April 29 – 30 at Hassan Abul Sports Center and May 1- 3 at Boulevard. Sixteen teams will then head to the final on May 4, also at Boulevard.

In 2017, over 100,000 players from 53 countries battled it out to be crowned World Champions, with Romania coming out victorious. Neymar Jr's Five 2018 is set to be even bigger and more players than ever will get the chance to experience this beautiful game, as there'll also be women's competitions in addition to the

mixed competition in some countries.

This year, more than 60 countries from 6 continents will be hosting tournament qualifiers, where players will compete with the same dream of making it through the qualifiers, to their national final to book a ticket to the World Final, which will be celebrated for the third time at Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr. in Praia Grande, Brazil.

The 2018 World Champions will win the experience of a lifetime, with the chance to play against Neymar Jr. himself in Brazil and meeting him again in Paris.

"It's a fun, fast and technical game – it's the kind of football I've always loved to play and this time we play it with a special twist to it: the five-player teams lose

one player each time they concede a goal until there are no players left, or the 10-minute game ends. This will be even more exciting," says Neymar Junior.

Last year, 150 teams signed up for six national qualifiers in Kuwait, and only FCB Remuntada were lucky enough to represent Kuwait in the World Final and compete with teams from all over the world.

Teams of 5 to 7 players can sign up now on www.neymarjr5.com for a chance represent Kuwait in Brazil and meet Neymar!

Neymar Junior's Five Kuwait qualifier is sponsored by Intersport, Platinum, Talabat, and Acqua Eva. Media partner, Kuwait Times, will cover this popular event.



12 Boxing fights back in Nigeria after years down and out



13 Giants' Brandon Belt sets MLB record with 21-pitch at bat



14 Klopp calls for Roma respect amid Anfield cauldron



MILWAUKEE: Giannis Antetokounmpo #34 of the Milwaukee Bucks goes to the basket against the Boston Celtics in Game Four of Round One of the 2018 NBA Playoffs on Sunday at Bradley Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. — AFP

Bucks edge Celtics to level series

Wizards post 106-98 victory over Raptors

MILWAUKEE: Giannis Antetokounmpo tipped in Malcolm Brogdon's missed floater for the game-winning bucket with 5.1 seconds remaining as host Milwaukee beat Boston to even the series at 2-2. Antetokounmpo had 27 points and Khris Middleton had 23 to power Milwaukee, which lost the first two games of its Eastern Conference quarterfinal series in Boston before coming to life with two home wins. Game 5 is today in Boston. Boston's Marcus Morris missed a fadeaway jumper at the buzzer that would have tied it. The Celtics have never lost a playoff series when leading 2-0. Milwaukee, which won 116-92 in Game 3, has never won a series after starting in an 0-2 hole.

CLEVELAND 104, INDIANA 100

LeBron James scored 32 points and Kyle Korver hit two clutch 3-pointers late in the fourth quarter to lead

the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 104-100 victory over the Indiana Pacers, evening their first-round playoff series at two games apiece Sunday night in Indianapolis. James grabbed a team-high 13 rebounds. Korver scored 18 points, including eight in the final three-plus minutes. JR Smith and Jordan Clarkson each scored 12 points for the Cavaliers. Game 5 in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference quarterfinal series is Wednesday night in Cleveland. Victor Oladipo sank a 3-pointer to cut Indiana's deficit to 103-100 with 11.9 seconds to go. Pacers guard Lance Stephenson was called for foul after taking Jeff Green down trying to tie the ball up. Green hit one free throw. Bojan Bogdanovic missed a 3-pointer with 3.9 seconds left, and James sealed it by grabbing the rebound. Domantas Sabonis came off the bench to lead the Pacers with 19 points while Myles Turner contributed 17 points.

WIZARDS 106, RAPTORS 98

Bradley Beal scored 31 points before fouling out, and John Wall recorded 27 points, 14 assists, six rebounds and three steals as Washington posted a victory over visiting Toronto to even their Eastern Conference first-round series at two games apiece. Beal made 5 of 7 3-point attempts before his exit as his teammates closed out the victory in impressive fashion. Marcin Gortat and Otto Porter Jr. added 12 points apiece and Kelly Oubre Jr. scored 10 for the eighth-seeded Wizards. Shortly after Beal's exit, the Wizards took control with a 12-2 burst to take a 104-96 lead with 21.9 seconds left. DeMar DeRozan had 35 points, six rebounds and six assists for the top-seeded Raptors, who were outscored 66-47 in the second half. Kyle Lowry made four 3-pointers while scoring 19 points for Toronto. Game 5 is Wednesday in Toronto.

SPURS 103, WARRIORS 90

LaMarcus Aldridge banked in a 3-pointer to stave off a Golden State rally in the fourth quarter, allowing host San Antonio to avoid a sweep in its first-round playoff series. Game 5 in the best-of-seven series will take place Tuesday night at Golden State, with the Warriors leading 3-1, one win away from a second-round matchup with the New Orleans Pelicans. The Spurs never trailed, leading by as many as 10 in the first quarter and 17 in the second as Ettore Messina coached the Spurs in the season-saving win as head coach Gregg Popovich missed his second straight game following the death of his wife Erin. Aldridge scored a team-high 22 points. Kevin Durant led the Warriors with 34 points and 13 rebounds. — Reuters

Chiellini injury blow for Juventus title quest

TURIN: Juventus defender Giorgio Chiellini has suffered a torn hamstring muscle, the champions confirmed yesterday, and will miss this weekend's clash against Inter Milan and possibly the rest of the season.

The news is a blow for the six-time defending champions after Napoli reignited the title race with a last-gasp 1-0 win in Turin on Sunday night to cut Juventus' advantage to just one point.

Juventus never looked comfortable in their Allianz Stadium after losing veteran Chiellini—who is their best defender and a team leader—inside the opening minute. The 33-year-old gritted his teeth and tried to play on but was forced off ten minutes later with a knee problem. "Chiellini underwent medical tests following his early exit from Sunday's match against Napoli," Juventus said in a statement. "Following the examina-

tions, in which appropriate caution was taken due to the nature of the injury, it has been revealed that Chiellini suffered a tear to the biceps femoris muscle in his left knee.

"Chiellini, who will undergo further tests, has already started his therapy." He will miss Saturday's trip to the San Siro but for the former Italian international the season could already be over with just four games to play and the Italian Cup final against AC Milan on May 9.

Allegri, meanwhile, defended his side who showed signs of tiredness after a gruelling season in which they were eliminated from the Champions League by Real Madrid in the quarter-finals. "We've played 57 games in each of the last four seasons," Allegri said after the match. "We've always reached the Italian Cup final, while we have made the Champions League final twice (in the past three years) and were eliminated with 30 seconds left on two occasions. "The others are already out of everything in November, yet no-one says anything. When you play at the rate we do, I think it's normal to be tired. "You can't criticise these lads under any circumstances. If you do, you'll also make me lose my patience, which I have plenty of." Napoli-bidding for a third title after 1987 and 1990 — travel to Fiorentina on Sunday. — AFP

Japan's women show struggling male footballers the way

TOKYO: As Japan's women return home with the Asian Cup and bold plans for world domination, their crisis-hit male counterparts have serious work to do to avoid an early World Cup exit. The Japanese "Nadeshiko" came to embody the iron-willed spirit of a country recovering from a deadly tsunami and nuclear crisis when they pulled off an astonishing World Cup triumph in 2011.

They followed that by claiming silver at the 2012 London Olympics, winning the 2014 Asian Cup and reaching another World Cup final a year later. That consistency continued when they retained their continental crown after

a 1-0 win over Australia in Friday's final.

Despite their success, Japan coach Asako Takakura wants more from her players looking ahead to the next year's World Cup in France. "We weren't able to play like Nadeshiko in the final," she told Japan's Nikkan Sports on Monday after winning her first major title since taking over from Norio Sasaki in 2016.

"At the World Cup we want to take the initiative more and show our tough competitiveness. We are still a work in progress." But as the Nadeshiko—who are named after a frilly pink carnation-chase silverware, Japan's men have become shrinking violets, bereft of strong leadership and lacking an identity. They head to this summer's World Cup in disarray after coach Vahid Halilhodzic was sacked just two months before the start of the tournament. The Japan Football Association (JFA) turned to former technical director Akira Nishino to help the team's fragile confidence and plaster over the cracks after damaging rifts appeared between key players and Halilhodzic. More fallout is expected later this week when the firebrand Franco-Bosnian held a news conference in Tokyo, having already accused his former employers of keeping him in the dark about his firing.—AFP

Business

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018

18 IMF keeps global GDP forecasts; alters regional growth outlook



19 China may readjust policy if trade war dispute worsens



21 1 in 2 professionals in Kuwait seeking employment in new industry



FRANKFURT AM: A picture taken with a fisheye lens shows the headquarters of German bank Deutsche Bank in Frankfurt am Main. — AFP

Ooredoo reports KD 175m revenue for Q1 2018

Customer base up by 2% to reach 26 million

KUWAIT: National Mobile Telecommunications Company K.S.C.P "Ooredoo" announced yesterday its financial results for the quarter ended 31 March 2018:

Financial highlights:

- Consolidated customer base increased by 2% to reach 25.8 million in Q1 2018, compared to 25.4 million in Q1 2017.
- Revenue increased 3% to KD 174.6 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 169.0 million for the same period in 2017.
- EBITDA was KD 55.3 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 64.9 million for the same period in 2017.
- Net Profit Attributable to NMTC was KD 9.2 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 12.9 million for the same period last year. The decrease was mainly caused by a lower Algerian contribution due to a weak economic environment and higher taxes.
- The consolidated Earnings per Share was 18 fils in Q1 2018, compared to 26 fils per share earned for the same period last year.

Sheikh Saud Bin Nasser Al-Thani, Chairman of the Board of Directors commented: "On Group level for the three months ended March 31st 2018, we've increased our customer base by 2 percent and we now proudly serve almost 26 million customers. Revenue was up 3 percent to KD 175 million. EBITDA and net profit were adversely impacted by the challenges in the Algerian market and additional taxes.

In Kuwait, the significant increase in revenue of 37 percent in Q1 2018 was mainly driven by non-recurring business. Higher handset sales lead to a compression of margins.

In Tunisia we maintained our market

leadership, particularly in the mobile data space. In Q1 2018 our customer base and local currency revenue increased by 7 percent and 8 percent, respectively compared to the same period last year, leading to stable EBITDA levels.

In Algeria we sustained our mobile data leadership and continued to deploy the 4G network across the country.

In Palestine, our West Bank customers are now enjoying high quality data services via our 3G network. Furthermore, we launched services in Gaza in October 2017, that led to a 55 percent increase in customer numbers and a 15 percent increase in revenue, compared to the same period last year.

Review of operations

The Group's operational performance can be summarized as follows:

Ooredoo - Kuwait

Ooredoo's customer base in Kuwait stood at 2.2 million in Q1 2018, representing a 5 percent decrease compared to the same period in 2017 due to intense competition and weak market conditions. Revenues for Q1 2018 were KD 65.5 million, an increase of 37 percent compared to KD 47.8 million for the same period in 2017. Higher handset sales led to an increase in revenue, while at the same time negatively impacting mar-



Sheikh Saud Bin Nasser Al-Thani



gins. Consequently, EBITDA was KD 11.8 million in Q1 2018, slightly lower than KD 12.4 million in Q1 2017.

Ooredoo - Tunisia

Ooredoo's customer base in Tunisia reached 8.5 million in Q1 2018, an increase of 7 percent compared to the same period in 2017. Revenues were stable at KD 31.9 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 31.8 million for the same period in 2017. EBITDA was KD 11.9 million compared to KD 12.1 million for the same period in 2017.

Ooredoo - Algeria

Business in Algeria was negatively impacted by an increase in taxes and a weak economic environment. Customer numbers of Ooredoo Algeria declined by 3 percent to 13.5 million in Q1 2018, compared with the same period in 2017. Revenues also decreased to KD 60.4 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 73.8 million for the same period in 2017. EBITDA was KD 25.2 million in Q1 2018, down from KD 33.4 million in Q1 2017.

Wataniya - Palestine

Wataniya Palestine made good progress in the first three months of the year, with the launch of the 3G network in the West Bank in January 2018. Customer numbers increased by 55 percent to 1.2 million also benefiting from the Gaza launch in October 2017. Revenue increased to KD 7.1 million, up by 15 percent compared to KD 6.2 million for the same period in 2017. EBITDA was slightly down at KD 1.1 million, compared to KD 1.5 million in Q1 2017.

Ooredoo - Maldives

Ooredoo Maldives reported a 2 percent increase in revenue in Q1 2018 to KD 9.6 million, compared to KD 9.5 million for the same period in 2017. EBITDA stood at KD 5.2 million in Q1 2018, compared to KD 5.6 million for the same period in 2017. Ooredoo Maldives now serves a total of 442k customers, a 9 percent increase compared to the same period in 2017.



Qatar Airways to expand despite 'large loss': Chief

DOHA: Qatar Airways will continue to expand even as it prepares to announce "large" annual losses due to a blockade by neighbors, the airline's chief executive said yesterday.

Akbar Al-Baker said the Gulf carrier remained a "very robust company" despite being heavily affected by a regional diplomatic dispute that has seen it lose access to routes across Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt. "Yes, it will be a large loss. When I say we will be declaring a large loss, for me, after making profit, then even if I lost only 10 million, it's a large loss," Baker told a press conference. But he said that the national carrier is not in danger of a collapse. "You can see although that we are predicting a loss, we are still expand-

ing, we are still investing, we are still buying airplanes. "We will keep on expanding, keep on recruiting not firing people, not parking airplanes, (and) shrinking the network, doing exactly the opposite."

Barring Qatar Airways from using its neighbors' airspace has increased costs for the company during the 10 months since the crisis erupted. The airline made a profit of \$540 million last year and new results will be announced in June. Qatar Airways has a fleet of around 200 aircraft and over 100 more on firm orders. The outspoken Baker accused neighboring former allies of "bullying" Qatar after they cut all ties with the emirate last June.

Taking a swipe at American carriers, he said they hide behind US bankruptcy protection laws whereas Qatar Airways does not enjoy this benefit. Baker also confirmed that plans to expand Doha's Hamad International Airport in time for the 2022 World Cup would go ahead. But he denied recent claims in Norwegian media about labor abuse at the airport, run by Qatar Airways. "As far as the welfare of employees is concerned, we are really a role model," he said. — AFP

Financial Highlights:

	Quarterly Analysis		
	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	% change
Consolidated Revenue (KWD m)	174.6	169.0	3%
EBITDA (KWD m)	55.3	64.9	-15%
EBITDA margin (%)	32%	38%	-
Net Profit attributable to NMTC (KWD m)	9.2	12.9	-29%
Consolidated Customers (m)	25.8	25.4	2%

KAMCO Research on IMF Economic Outlook

IMF keeps global GDP forecasts; alters regional growth outlook

Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain to see faster growth in 2019

KUWAIT: IMF kept global growth estimates for the current year and next year stable in its World Economic Outlook (WEO) released in Apr-18, from its last update in Jan-18. Real GDP growth projections for 2018 and 2019 are expected to come in at 3.9 percent each year, but the IMF altered regional growth estimates from their Jan-18 estimates. Global GDP growth for 2017 was also revised by 10bps to 3.8 percent in April-18 from 3.7 percent estimated in Jan-18, as two-thirds of the countries accounting for 75 percent of global growth witnessed growth from 2016.

MENA GDP growth

Growth revisions for the MENA region was mixed, as 2018 GDP was brought down by 20 bps to 3.2 percent in IMF's Apr-18 WEO, due to the ongoing fiscal adjustment and geopolitical risks that weigh on oil exporters. Nevertheless for 2019, IMF pushed GDP growth for the region up by 30bps to 3.6 percent, ascribed to a resumption of higher oil output post the expiration of OPEC production cuts. In terms of country upgrades, IMF expects stronger momentum in domestic demand and structural reforms to result in higher growth for Egypt in 2018 (5.2 percent) and 2019 (5.5 percent), as estimates were revised upwards by 70bps and 20bps from Oct-17 estimates.

For Saudi Arabia, the higher oil output is forecasted to be more than offset by the ongoing fiscal consolidation measures in 2019, as GDP growth was brought down by 30bps to 1.9 percent. In 2018, stronger oil prices are expected to aid a recovery in

domestic demand, and contribute to a GDP growth of 1.7 percent (+10 bps). However for 2018, barring Saudi Arabia and Bahrain (+130bps), the IMF revised GDP forecasts for other GCC countries downwards as compared to Oct-17 estimates. For 2019, GDP forecasts of Oman (4.2 percent), Kuwait (3.8 percent) and Bahrain (2.3 percent) were raised, while the GDP growth for the UAE was brought down by 10 bps to 3.0 percent.

Higher fiscal consolidation in GCC

Higher oil prices are expected to result in better current account balances in the GCC over 2018 and 2019. IMF expects Kuwait's current account surplus in GDP terms to be the highest in the region at 5.8 percent of GDP in 2018, improving by 720bps from their Oct-18 update, while 2019 current account surplus in GDP terms is forecasted to improve by 500 bps (3.6 percent). KAMCO Research expects higher oil prices to give GCC countries more flexibility in terms of their ongoing fiscal consolidation plans. However, we continue to expect initiatives to bolster the GCC non-oil economy to be less synchronized than the previous years, as individual GCC countries are likely to use different fiscal tools to shore up their state finances.

OPEC production

IMF assumes average oil prices to improve by \$9.6/bbl in 2018 (\$62.3/bbl) based on oil price futures; from an average of \$52.7/bbl achieved over 2017. In 2019 however, a decline to \$58.2/bbl is forecasted. The current oil price forecasts by the



IMF for 2018 and 2019 represent an increase from Jan-18 estimates. IMF's oil price assumptions are however below consensus mean and median analyst estimates for 2018 and 2019 which are around \$65/bbl.

Inflation estimates for GCC countries were revised downwards in 2018, barring the UAE, where the introduction of VAT and indexed energy costs are behind the upward revision of 2018 CPI inflation estimate of 4.2 percent (+130bps) in our view. For the GCC region in 2019 we expect GDP growth, newer initiatives for non-oil growth and further fiscal consolidation measures to focus on oil price cues from the extension of OPEC oil production cuts post Dec-2018.

Advanced Economies to grow faster in 2018 than expected earlier; US growth for 2018 & 2019 stronger Advanced Economies are now expected to grow 20bps faster in

2018 (2.5 percent) than expected in IMF's Jan-18 WEO update, while estimates for 2019 (+2.2 percent) were kept stable. The growth of Emerging Market & Developing Economies was kept stable for 2018 (4.9 percent), while the estimate for 2019 was pushed up by 10bps (+5.1 percent), as compared to Jan-18 estimates.

The higher growth of Advanced Economies in 2018 seen currently by the IMF as compared to Jan-18 projections, is driven mainly by upward revisions in the GDP growth of the US and the Euro Area. US growth was revised 20 bps higher each for 2018 (2.9 percent) and 2019 (2.7 percent), as a result of a higher base of economic activity in 2017, higher projected external demand and the impact of recent fiscal policy changes. GDP growth for the Euro area was revised upwards in 2018 by 20bps to 2.4 percent led by higher growth

expected from Germany, France, Italy and Spain, as compared to Jan-18 estimates, while 2019 estimates were unchanged. The higher forecasts by the IMF is ascribed to the stronger-than-expected domestic demand across the euro area, along with supportive monetary policy and external demand prospects.

Global trade to rebound further

Global trade growth estimates were pushed up by the IMF for 2018 (+50 bps) and 2019 (+30 bps) to 5.1 percent and 4.7 percent respectively, as the cyclical rebound in global trade from 2017 is expected to continue, driven by a recovery in advanced economy investment and domestic demand, along with improved investment growth rates in commodity exporters amongst emerging market and developing economies.

Equity and bond investors getting contradictory signals

By Hayder Tawfik

Somehow investors have accepted the return of market volatility that started back in January this year. This is somehow back to normality. However, the big question is, can investors live with a challenging macro environment that could impact bonds and equities in the coming months. Investors should assess the trading risks and opportunities in equities and bonds for the coming months. The global economic macro picture is still promising but the steady withdrawal of central bank stimulus, led by the US and Europe along with rising global trade tension and concerns that economic growth may have peaked all shape as influencing investor in the coming years.

Yields on government bonds in the developed economies have been trading in a narrow range since the start of the year. The earlier weakness in government bond prices were reversed because of potential global trade tension and some sign of economic weakness in the Eurozone and the UK. US government bond yield is the only one that has been seeing a sell



off and yield on 10-year US treasury has approached the 3 percent level.

As for equity markets that have been experiencing the return of higher volatility since the mid-January of this year, the question is whether technology companies will report good earnings for the first quarter and will they recover from last month's stumble. Equity investors should look through the reported earnings to distinguish the winner from the losers and position themselves for the rest of the year.

Tech sector the best

The technology sector remains the best sector to deliver good results as they are most immune from fundamental changes that has been affecting other business sectors. Although the sector might offer the greatest investment opportunity, investors are advised to pick the right stocks. The latest weakness in the technology sector has represented a buying opportunity given their business sustainability and quality of earnings. At present the technology sector offers compelling value compared to the broader market.

Whereas, the return of equity market volatility has been clear, the signals from the bond market is unclear and inconsistent which may lead to investors questioning the central banks' on going monetary policies. US government

bonds must deal with multiple factors that may have undesirable impact on economic growth. Yields on US treasury bonds have been rising over the past year. Yield on 2-year US treasury bond has risen from 1.25 percent to nearly 2.5 percent. This increase can easily be justified by the strong economic growth and the tax cut that has been passed by congress. In my opinion, rising rates reflect economic growth and the risk of inflation. Investors should remember that present yield levels are not high in historical terms but the speed of its increase could be signs of troubles ahead or it is just telling us that the market now expects the Federal Reserve to go through with raising rates soon.

Investors in long dated US government bonds are not prepared to bet on higher yields yet. The longer dated US government bond such as the 10-year bond yield is less driven by Fed Funds rates, and is more driven by expectations for inflation and growth in the long term. The yield is struggling to break the 3 percent level. This means that investors either not convinced about the future inflation expectation or they see slower economic growth in the coming months. At present the shape of the yield curve is flat and it has been narrowing. At present the yield on the 10-year US treasury bond exceeding the two-year yields by less than 0.5 percentage points, it has not been this narrow since before the crisis. That implies sluggish growth and low inflation long into the future. All of this tells us that rates will go up but future inflation is no longer a threat. Which may mean the Federal Reserve might reconsider its stance on raising rates. @rasameel

India's TCS crosses \$100bn market value

MUMBAI: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) became the first Indian company in a decade to breach the \$100-billion market value barrier after stocks in the IT giant soared yesterday.

Shares in India's largest software exporter rose more than 4 percent following positive earnings results to hit a high of 3,557 rupees (\$53.53) on the Bombay Stock Exchange's Sensex index. The surge propelled the firm's market capitalization value to 681 trillion rupees, above \$100 billion, as TCS became just the second Indian company in history to cross the symbolic mark.

Reliance Industries, the energy-to-telecoms conglomerate owned by Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani, was the first Indian group to breach the \$100-billion marker, back in 2008. "It is an important milestone, which not only gives us something to cheer but also changes the perspective and sentiment toward other Indian software makers," Gaurang Shah, head investment strategist at Geojit Financial Services Ltd. in Mumbai, told Bloomberg News. The shares were spurred by a TCS earnings report released on Thursday which showed that the technology company had enjoyed a 4.4 per cent rise in consolidated net profit year-on-year for the quarter ending March. TCS recorded net profits of 69.04 billion rupees, beating many analysts' expectations. The IT services exporter has also been boosted by a weakening rupee.

TCS was at the forefront of India becoming a back office to the world as companies-largely in developed nations-subcontracted work, taking advantage of the country's skilled English-speaking workforce. The flagship industry has made India a top business destination by offering software development and information technology, engineering and design and other services. —AFP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.	
ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.806
Indian Rupees	4.630
Pakistani Rupees	2.602
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.933
Nepali Rupees	2.902
Singapore Dollar	230.250
Hongkong Dollar	38.311
Bangladesh Taka	3.593
Philippine Peso	5.793
Thai Baht	9.679
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.210
Qatari Riyal	82.644
Omani Riyal	781.445
Bahraini Dinar	798.990
UAE Dirham	81.946
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	0.000
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.039
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.208
Tunisian Dinar	126.080
Jordanian Dinar	423.910
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.005
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	33.227
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	300.700
Euro	371.670
Sterling Pound	426.390

Canadian dollar	238.080
Turkish lira	74.520
Swiss Franc	315.860
Australian Dollar	234.090
US Dollar Buying	299.500
GOLD	
20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430
DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD	
Rate for Transfer	
US Dollar	300.250
Canadian Dollar	239.550
Sterling Pound	430.780
Euro	373.130
Swiss Franc	293.050
Bahrain Dinar	798.475
UAE Dirhams	82.150
Qatari Riyals	83.380
Saudi Riyals	80.960
Jordanian Dinar	424.760
Egyptian Pound	16.971
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.921
Indian Rupees	4.578
Pakistani Rupees	2.598
Bangladesh Taka	3.602
Philippines Peso	5.766
Cyprus pound	17.875
Japanese Yen	3.795
Syrian Pound	1.585

Nepalese Rupees	2.867
Malaysian Ringgit	78.085
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	48.175
Thai Bhat	10.605
Turkish Lira	73.815
BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY	
CURRENCY	
BUY	
Europe	
British Pound	0.416051
Czech Korune	0.006538
Danish Krone	0.045485
Euro	0.363588
Georgian Lari	0.137752
Hungarian	0.001096
Norwegian Krone	0.034326
Romanian Leu	0.062345
Russian ruble	0.004905
Slovakia	0.008942
Swedish Krona	0.031525
Swiss Franc	0.301858
SELL	
Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.222720
New Zealand Dollar	0.210426
America	
Canadian Dollar	0.230483
US Dollars	0.296900
US Dollars Mint	0.297400

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003194
Chinese Yuan	0.046318
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036296
Indian Rupee	0.004104
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017
Japanese Yen	0.002705
Korean Won	0.000271
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073497
Nepalese Rupee	0.002495
Pakistan Rupee	0.003003
Philippine Peso	0.005671
Singapore Dollar	0.223044
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001607
Taiwan	0.010069
Thai Baht	0.009240
Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.791777
Egyptian Pound	0.013875
Iranian Riyal	0.000083
Iraqi Dinar	0.000262
Jordanian Dinar	0.419925
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000148
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023329
Omani Riyal	0.775500
Qatar Riyal	0.078387
Saudi Riyal	0.079180
Syrian Pound	0.001275
Tunisian Dinar	0.121176
Turkish Lira	0.068855
UAE Dirhams	0.080526
Yemeni Riyal	0.000978
0.003778	
0.049818	
0.039046	
0.004745	
0.000023	
0.002885	
0.000286	
0.079497	
0.003173	
0.002785	
0.005971	
0.233044	
0.002187	
0.010249	
0.009790	
0.800277	
0.019583	
0.000085	
0.000262	
0.428925	
1.000000	
0.000248	
0.047329	
0.781180	
0.083327	
0.080480	
0.001495	
0.129176	
0.079155	
0.082226	
0.001058	

Business

China may readjust policy if trade war dispute worsens

Direct impact on China GDP this year likely to be limited

BEIJING: China's efforts to reduce its reliance on debt and find a more sustainable route to grow its economy may be derailed by the simmering trade dispute with the United States, economists warn.

This was the year that Beijing was expected to step up its controls on unfettered lending, particularly in the so-called shadow banking area, as it seeks to contain a dangerous build up in debt across much of the economy. But there have been signs in the past few weeks that as US President Donald Trump has ratcheted up the pressure on China over its trade policy - including a series of threats to impose punitive tariffs on Chinese goods coming into the United States - that a backsliding on deleveraging may be close.

The most obvious sign of this came last Tuesday when China's central bank unexpectedly announced it was cutting the amount of cash that banks must keep in reserves. Then on Thursday, China's state planner said it aims to cut commercial and industrial electricity prices by an average of 10 percent, a move that aligns with a years-long effort to reduce corporate costs, though the size and timing of the cut again surprised financial markets.

China has also this year vowed to lighten the tax burden on individuals and businesses and on May 1 will lower the value-added tax rate for the manufacturing, transportation, construction, telecommunication and agricultural sectors. This all has at least some investors and economists predicting that if the skirmishes with the United States turn into something approaching a no-holds-barred trade war, then Beijing will do a lot more to support industry and the overall economy. "If you were to see a negative growth shock, then I don't think they would hold the line and say we're still going to prioritize reducing credit growth and deleveraging the financial sector. I think that would change priorities," said Alex Wolf, senior emerging markets economist at Aberdeen Standard Investments.

Underlying this are government concerns that if the economy slowed significantly from the current 2018 target of around 6.5 percent growth then it could cause hardship in parts of the economy, and leave more people jobless or underemployed. The Communist Party govern-

ment has been traditionally sensitive to anything that could create unrest, such as strikes and other protests, and potentially lead to a challenge to its authority.

Signs of slowing momentum

To be sure, over the past year China has powered through a slowdown in home price gains, weaker credit growth and an environmental crackdown to deliver better-than-expected growth. In the first quarter, gross domestic product (GDP) in the world's second-largest economy grew 6.8 percent - well above the annual target. And some don't see the trade tensions getting out of control.

"We are still optimistic about the global economic recovery and China's exports outlook, giving Beijing leeway to stick to the current deleveraging agenda," said Robin Xing, Chief China Economist at Morgan Stanley. But the Chinese economic data for March - such as weaker growth in industrial output and investment - is suggesting that momentum is slowing.

If there is a faltering in exports - whose strong growth last year provided cover for Beijing to drive down the leverage - it could push the authorities to shift policy back to its old playbook to support growth, the economists say.

Net exports' contribution to GDP growth last year was the highest in 10 years, according to data from the National Bureau of Statistics. But so far this year, that trend has reversed with exports pulling down growth.

Analysts caution that it is still too early to assess the direct impact of tariffs on China's economic growth and macro-policy, as none of the recently announced tariffs has been implemented, and any that eventually does go into effect could be significantly watered down through negotiation.

Even if Trump's current threats to impose tariffs on \$150 billion of Chinese imports are fully implemented, that would still only impact less than 7 percent of China's total exports last year, and less than 2 percent of GDP.

The direct impact of tariffs is most likely to initially show up in higher inflation and some localized unemployment if factories in affected sectors see their business hit, but neither are expected to be severe, economists and officials

say. Cong Liang, director at the National Development and Reform Commission's department of national economy, told Reuters that China's job market is resilient, with a labour shortage in coastal cities showing the market is able to absorb any job losses caused by a Sino-US trade war.

But side skirmishes such as Washington's decision to ban American companies from providing components to Chinese telecoms equipment company ZTE for seven years - in an Iran sanctions-busting case - are likely to have a longer-term impact on growth. The US government has also recently rejected attempts by Chinese companies to buy a number of American assets, particularly in sensitive sectors. And approval of some American-led takeover deals are being held up in Beijing currently.

These barriers to capital flows and trade will hinder both economies but also hurt China's effort to move up the value chain, improve the quality of its economic growth and maintain a steady increase in household incomes.

More reliance on domestic demand

The economic tension "will probably dampen productivity growth in the coming decades; it will dampen it in China and it will probably dampen productivity growth globally," said Louis Kuijs, head of Asia economics at Oxford Economics.

"We are basically expecting domestic demand growth to play a larger role this year and next than we had initially. And that will have to come about by a less restrictive policy stance than we had assumed before," he said. Oxford expects China's GDP to grow 6.5 percent this year, indicating significant slowing from the first quarter. The economists say that investors should look for a number of additional signals from Beijing to see whether it has shifted policy.

One would be another easing in bank reserve requirements. China could allow local government to issue more special bonds to support government spending on urban redevelopment and infrastructure investment to shore up domestic demand, said Xing from Morgan Stanley. — Reuters



CARLSBAD: People head out to pick strawberries in Carlsbad. Fresh strawberries are among the 128 US goods China has imposed tariffs on in retaliation for US tariffs on Chinese goods. — AFP

Greece wants clean bailout exit

ATHENS: Greece will exit its bailout program without requesting a precautionary credit line, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said yesterday, adding that Athens would not return to the "spendthrift days" of the past, before the debt crisis erupted. Greece's current bailout, the third since 2010, expires on August 20. Athens hopes that it will have regained full market access by then and be free to set its own economic policy after eight years of tight supervision by the eurozone and the International Monetary Fund. But some EU officials are worried that as time passes, Greek politicians will be under increasing pressure to go on a spending spree again.

"There is neither a bailout extension nor a fake exit, a non-clean or a dirty exit - call it

anything you want - in sight", Tsipras told his lawmakers. "There is a clear completion (of the programme), a clean exit," he said.

"But this doesn't mean that we will... return to the days of plenty, the spendthrift days."

Euro zone creditors are now working on a debt relief offer for Greece that would be an incentive for Athens not to backtrack on reforms and to continue to stick to prudent fiscal policy, senior EU officials said last week.

Greece will officially present its own post-bailout policy plan at a meeting of euro zone finance ministers this week, Tsipras said adding that he hoped that negotiations on the terms of the post-bailout period would be concluded by the end of June. He added that the IMF's participation in the current bailout was still an open issue and that the climate between Athens and the Washington-based Fund during talks in recent months had improved. "But we don't believe that the IMF's possible non participation in the third bailout is the end of the world," Tsipras said. — Reuters

Remittance payments hit record in 2017: World Bank

WASHINGTON: Payments from immigrants back to their home countries rebounded to reach a new record in 2017 but the costs of transferring funds also increased, the World Bank said yesterday.

The stronger-than-expected recovery in remittances-payments that are key to supporting the economies of many poor countries-was driven by growth in Europe, Russia and the United States, the World Bank said in a report. The bank estimates that officially recorded remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached \$466 billion in 2017, an increase of 8.5 percent over \$429 billion in 2016. They are expected to increase by about four percent this year.

Remittance inflows improved in all regions and the top remittance recipients were India with \$69 billion, followed by China (\$64 billion), the Philippines (\$33 billion), Mexico (\$31 billion), Nigeria (\$22 billion), and Egypt (\$20 billion).

The global average cost of sending \$200 was 7.1 percent in the first quarter of 2018, and sub-Saharan Africa remains the most expensive place to send money to, where the average cost is 9.4 percent. "While remittances are growing, countries, institutions, and development agencies must continue to chip away at high costs of remitting so



WASHINGTON, DC: International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde answers a question at a seminar on "Restoring Trust by Curbing Corruption" during the IMF/World Bank Spring Meetings at the IMF Headquarters in Washington, DC, on Sunday. — AFP

that families receive more of the money," said Dilip Ratha, lead author of the report.

The bank calls on countries to take steps to simplify the process to reduce the costs, including "introducing more efficient technology."

By region, Europe and Central Asia saw the biggest growth last year, jumping 21 percent, while Sub-Saharan Africa rose 11 percent. East Asia and the Pacific saw the biggest inflows of \$130 billion, as South Asia received \$117 billion, followed by Latin America with \$80 billion. — AFP

"Chinese demand points to strong growth," said US bank Goldman Sachs in a note to clients, adding that it may be "higher than currently estimated".

Res-stocking

Michal Meidan of consultancy Energy Aspects said Chinese buyers were re-stocking after running down inventories late last year. Much of China's new demand also comes from the advent of non-state refiners - often called teapots - as crude importers, resulting in record refining throughput. "A number of teapots are starting new Crude Distillation Units (CDUs) and secondary units, pulling in more crude," Meidan said, adding that there may also be some purchases of Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPRs).

Beyond re-stocking and teapots, analysts said China's economic performance has also been stronger than expected. "Chinese growth of 6.8 percent in Q1 is higher than its target of 6.5 percent for the year. The supportive growth environment in China is one key reason for a supported oil demand story in general," said Barnabas Gan, analyst at Singapore's OCBC Bank.

Suresh Sivanandam of energy consultancy Wood Mackenzie said he expected China's overall oil demand to grow by 370,000 bpd this year to 12.78 million bpd.

Adding in other regions, Goldman said global oil demand in the first quarter of 2018 is likely to post the strongest year-on-year growth since the last quarter of 2010. A tighter market is also showing up in rising costs for crude deliveries to Asia as Middle East producers raise their official selling prices (OSPs). The OSPs for Abu Dhabi's Murban and Saudi Arabia's Light crudes are currently showing their highest premiums to Dubai since 2014.

With demand growing all around, some analysts say there is little reason to expect anything but further price increases. Standard Chartered Bank said this week there were "no bears left in this oil town". So far, refiners in Asia are still operating at high levels to meet strong demand, despite rising crude feedstock prices eating into profit margins. — Reuters

Asian oil demand to hit record, but industry can't take eyes off Middle East

SINGAPORE: Asian oil demand will hit a record in April just as global crude values are lifted to levels not seen in three years by Middle East supply risks and top exporter Saudi Arabia withholding output and noisily pushing for prices at \$80 to \$100 per barrel.

Most analysts have pointed to escalating Middle East conflicts, a crisis in Venezuela, and the supply cuts of Saudi Arabia and other producers as the main drivers taking global benchmark Brent and U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude futures this week to their highest since late 2014 at almost \$75 and \$70 a barrel, respectively. Yet a much more fundamental reason has also sparked oil's bull run: Asian demand, which Goldman Sachs said this week points to an average price of \$80 a barrel in 2018.

"Rising tensions in the Middle East have likely played a role in oil price strength, but we believe a tight physical market is the key driver," US investment bank Jefferies said on Friday in a note to clients. Trade data in Thomson Reuters Eikon shows seaborne imports of crude oil by Asia's main buyers will hit a record this month, a big portion going to slake China's voracious thirst.

By end-April, China will likely have taken in more than 9 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude, its most ever. That's nearly 10 percent of global consumption and more than a third of Asia's overall demand. At \$75 a barrel, it implies monthly import costs for China of more than \$20 billion. The record comes despite maintenance season, which usually dents imports at this time of year, and indicates that China's oil requirement is bigger than expected.

2018 First Quarter Results

Customer Base

2017

25.4

Million Customers

+2%

2018

25.8

Million Customers

Revenue

2017

169.0

KD Million

+3%

2018

174.6

KD Million

Net Profit to NMTC

2017

12.9

KD Million

-2%

2018

9.2

KD Million

The Board of Directors of National Mobile Telecommunication Company K.S.C.P (Ooredoo) is pleased to announce to its shareholders that the company achieved a consolidated Net Profit attributable to shareholders of **KD 9.2 million**, translating to an earnings per share of **18.3 fils** for the first quarter of 2018. The revenue for the first quarter of 2018 reached to **KD 174.6 million**, compared with **KD 169.0 million** in the same period of 2017.

The Board of Directors takes this opportunity to express their gratitude and appreciation to NMTC (Ooredoo) shareholders, customers and to all our employees for their continuous efforts.

ooredoo.com.kw

Business

Wall St flat as industrials offset lower oil

NEW YORK: US stocks were little changed yesterday, with gains in industrial and healthcare stocks offsetting the impact from falling oil prices, as investors kept an eye on rising US bond yields. The yield on 10-year US Treasuries, the benchmark for global borrowing costs, hit 2.998 percent, its highest since January 2014. The US five-year inflation swap, a key market gauge of long-term US inflation, hit its highest level in 3-1/2 years. The last time 10-year Treasury yields neared 3 percent, in 2013, it rocked risk appetite and sent stocks sliding and was shortly before oil prices went on a mighty 75 percent tumble. More recently, the stock market sold off in February as inflation expectations sent treasury yields surging.

But analysts say strong earnings could help investors overlook such concerns, at least for the moment. "Earnings are going to be the bigger factor, the increase in yields isn't too excessive just yet and investors may be willing to take it in stride," said Scott Brown, chief economist at Raymond James in St.

Petersburg, Florida.

"We came into the earnings season with pretty lofty expectations and the earnings have been relatively strong." The prospect of rising inflation comes as US companies are reporting results for what is turning out to be a much stronger-than-expected first quarter.

The US dollar rallied to a seven-week high yesterday as investors bought the greenback on the rise in the 10-year US Treasury yield toward the psychologically important 3 percent level, leaving the euro and yen lower.

The 10-year yield hit its highest in over four years at 2.998 percent, driven by worries about the growing supply of government debt and accelerating inflation as oil and commodity prices climb.

The strong dollar also reflected an improved outlook on trade. US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said on Saturday he may travel to China, a move that could ease trade tensions between the world's two largest economies. A stronger dollar "was the trend

overnight, mostly due to positive sentiment on trade," said Sireen Harajli, currency strategist at Mizuho in New York. Rising US bond yields have not always fed through to a higher dollar in 2018 as US political uncertainty and geopolitical tensions have sometimes caused a breakdown between interest rates and currency performance.

Earnings

Profits at S&P 500 companies are expected to have risen 20 percent in the quarter, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S, making it the strongest quarter in seven years. At 9:49 a.m. ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 7.01 points, or 0.03 percent, at 24,469.95, the S&P 500 was up 1.48 points, or 0.06 percent, at 2,671.62 and the Nasdaq Composite was up 2.01 points, or 0.03 percent, at 7,148.14.

This week, 181 S&P 500 companies are scheduled to report including some of the technology heavy-hitters like Facebook, Microsoft, Amazon and Intel.

Seven of the 11 major S&P sectors were higher, led by a 0.35 percent gain in the S&P healthcare index. Merck rose 1.6 percent after Goldman Sachs upgraded the stock to "buy". Caterpillar rose 0.6 percent after Citigroup upgraded to "buy", saying the stock could outperform over the next six to 12 months. Boeing rose 0.3 percent, providing the biggest boost to the Dow and industrial stocks.

In a move that could ease tensions between the United States and China, US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said on Saturday he may travel to China to try to resolve differences over trade.

Hasbro fell 1 percent after the toymaker reported a bigger-than-expected drop in quarterly revenue, blaming the liquidation of Toys 'R' Us. Declining issues outnumbered advancers by a 1.15-to-1 ratio on the NYSE and by a 1.14-to-1 ratio on the Nasdaq. The S&P index recorded three new 52-week highs and nine new lows, while the Nasdaq recorded 31 new highs and 25 new lows. — Reuters

Merkel, Mexican president hail benefits of free trade

HANOVER: German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto, who both face trade tensions with US President Donald Trump, on Sunday praised an EU-Mexico deal to boost economic ties. Pena Nieto also voiced "optimism" that Mexico could reach a deal to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which Trump has threatened to tear up if it is not revised to be more favorable to his country.

Merkel hailed as "truly good news for Europe, Germany and Mexico" the agreement "in principle" reached Saturday between Brussels and the Latin American country to modernize a 2000 free-trade deal, which is expected to be finalized by the end of the year.

"We know we face common challenges, and we believe that multilateral cooperation can be an added value for all," the leader of Europe's top economy said at the opening of the Hanover Fair on industrial technology, where Mexico is this year's partner country. "And that's why we are working for free international trade based on common rules." Pena Nieto said that Mexico, long a closed, protectionist economy, had changed into an open, export-based economy "integrated with the entire world", with 12 free trade



BRUSSELS: European Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmstrom (left) and EU Commissioner of Agriculture & Rural Development Phil Hogan give a joint press on the EU-Mexico trade agreement at the EU Headquarters in Brussels, yesterday. — AFP

deals that grant it access to 46 countries.

The Mexican leader said that "we have optimism as well that we're going to be concluding the renegotiation" of NAFTA, "ensuring benefits for all its partners".

Merkel and Pena Nieto will Monday again visit the Hannover Messe, the world's biggest industrial technology fair, where Mexico is the first Latin American partner country with exhibits by more than 110 companies and institutions.

Pena Nieto was also due to visit the Wolfsburg headquarters of German auto giant Volkswagen, which has its second-largest plant in Puebla, Mexico, before he

continues his Europe visit in the Netherlands and Spain. Merkel is due to visit Washington on Friday where, among several tricky issues, she will try to soothe tensions over Germany's large trade surplus with the United States.

Trump has also vowed punishing new US steel and aluminum tariffs, claiming foreign imports are harming US national security by undermining the domestic production needed for military readiness.

A temporary exemption for the largest foreign sources of the metals, including Mexico and Europe, is due to expire on May 1. — AFP

Rice farmers see rough times downstream of Nile mega-dam

KAFR ZIADA, Egypt/DUBAI: Rice farmers in Kafr Ziada village in the Nile River Delta have ignored planting restrictions aimed at conserving water for years, continuing to grow a medium-grain variety of the crop that is prized around the Arab world. A decision thousands of kilometers to the south is about to change that, however, in another example of how concern about water, one of the world's most valuable commodities, is forcing change in farming, laws and even international diplomacy.

Far upstream, close to one of the sources of the Nile, Ethiopia is preparing to fill the reservoir behind its new \$4 billion Grand Renaissance Dam, possibly as soon as this year. How fast it does so could have devastating consequences for farmers who have depended on the Nile for millennia to irrigate strategic crops for Egypt's 96 million people, expected to grow to 128 million by 2030.

Safeguarding Egypt's share of the Nile, on which the country relies for industry and

drinking water as well as farming, is now at the top of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's agenda as he begins a second term. At the same time, authorities are finally tackling widespread illegal growing of the water-intensive rice crop, showing a sense of urgency that even climate change and rapid population growth has failed to foster.

The crackdown means Egypt will likely be a rice importer in 2019 after decades of being a major exporter, rice traders say. Cairo has decreed that 724,000 feddans (750,000 acres) of rice can be planted this year, which grain traders estimate is less than half of the 1.8 million feddans actually cultivated in 2017 - far in excess of the officially allotted 1.1 million feddans.

Police have started raiding farmers' homes and jailing them until they pay outstanding fines from years back. "The police came to my house at three in the morning and took me to the station to pay the fine," said Mohamed Abdelkhalq, head of the farming association in Kafr Ziada, some 125 km (80 miles) north of Cairo in Beheira governorate.

"Even if the fine is 1 Egyptian pound (5 US cents), they'll come to your house." Three other farmers reported similar experiences and said this year they would not plant rice. Reda Abdelaziz, 50, said some people have become afraid to leave the village. "If you're travelling and they take your ID card and see you have a fine on you, they'll put you in jail," he said. Abdelkhalq took to the local mosque's

loudspeaker last month to say the government was doubling the fine for unauthorized rice cultivation to 7,600 pounds per feddan.

Mostafa Al-Naggari, who heads the rice committee of Egypt's agricultural export council, says if the government sticks to the new approach Egypt will likely have to import as much as 1 million tons of rice next year. "The dam has opened the door for there to be more of an awareness of water scarcity issues, but Egypt has for a long time needed to review its water allocation policy," he said.

No agreement

Egypt has long considered the Nile its own, even though the river and its tributaries flow through 10 countries. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat famously said in 1979 that he was prepared to go to war over the Nile if its flow was ever threatened. But any threat from Ethiopia in the past was empty - until now. The new dam, cutting through the Blue Nile tributary just before its descent into south-eastern Sudan, will offer Addis Ababa immense political leverage over its downstream neighbors. Sudan and Egypt are the biggest users of the river for irrigation and dams. Egypt wants to be assured that the dam will not affect the river's flow, estimated at about 84 billion cubic meters on average per year. Ethiopia aims to use the dam to become Africa's biggest power generator and exporter, linking tens of millions to electricity for the first time. — Reuters

Last month, sales surged 6.3 percent in the Northeast and jumped 5.7 percent in the Midwest, after being weighed down by bad weather in February. They slipped 0.4 percent in the South, where the bulk of sales activity occurs, and fell 3.1 percent in the West.

There is an acute shortage of homes, especially at the lower end of the market. According to the NAR, sales of houses priced below \$100,000 dropped 21 percent in March from a year ago. Sales of properties in the \$100,000-\$250,000 price range fell 8 percent, while those in the \$250,000-750,000 price category increased 4 percent.

The resulting higher house prices and rising mortgage rates are a constraint for first-time buyers, who have been largely priced out of the market. First-time home buyers accounted for 30 percent of transactions last month, up from 29 percent in February, but down from 32 percent year ago.

Economists believe some undecided buyers are rushing into the market to close contracts, fearful of further increases in home prices and mortgage rates. The 30-year fixed

mortgage rate is around 4.47 percent, the highest level since January 2014. The Federal Reserve raised interest rates last month against the backdrop of a tightening labor market and expansionary fiscal policy. The US central bank forecast at least two more rate hikes this year, a sign that mortgage rates could rise further.

The PHILX housing index was trading higher, outperforming a broadly firmer US stock market. The dollar rose against a basket of currencies while prices for US government bonds fell. The number of previously owned homes on the market rose 5.7 percent to 1.67 million units in March. Housing inventory was down 7.2 percent from a year ago. Supply has declined for 34 straight months on a year-on-year basis. Houses for sale typically stayed on the market for 30 days in March, down from 37 days in February and 34 days a year ago. At March's sales pace, it would take 3.6 months to exhaust the current inventory, up from 3.4 months in February. A six-to-seven-month supply is viewed as a healthy balance between supply and demand. — Reuters

US existing home sales rise; inventory remains tight

WASHINGTON: US home sales increased for a second straight month in March amid a rebound in activity in the Northeast and Midwest regions, but a dearth of houses on the market and higher prices remain headwinds as the spring selling season kicks off.

The National Association of Realtors said yesterday that existing home sales rose 1.1 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.60 million units last month. February's sales pace was unrevised.

Existing home sales, which account for about 90 percent of US home sales, fell 1.2 percent on a year-on-year basis in March.

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report										
At 02:00 PM Previous Day										
Global Stock Indices										
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %					
Dow Jones	24,464.89	24,462.94	-201.95	▼	-0.82	-1.04				
NASDAQ	7,238.06	7,146.13	-91.93	▼	-1.27	3.52				
S&P 500	2,693.13	2,670.14	-22.99	▼	-0.85	-0.13				
Financial Times	7,348.17	7,346.32	-1.85	▼	-0.03	-4.18				
DAX	12,540.50	12,531.22	-9.28	▼	-0.07	-2.99				
CAC 40	5,412.83	5,410.19	-2.64	▼	-0.05	1.84				
Swiss	8,807.80	8,774.32	-33.48	▼	-0.38	-6.48				
Nikkei 225	22,162.24	22,088.04	-74.20	▼	-0.33	-2.97				
Topix	1,751.13	1,750.79	-0.34	▼	-0.02	-3.67				
Hang Seng	30,418.33	30,254.40	-163.93	▼	-0.54	1.12				
Straits Times	3,573.38	3,579.54	6.16	▲	0.17	5.19				
MENA Stock Indices										
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %					
Kuwait	6,603.51	6,633.44	29.93	▲	0.45	2.96				
Saudi Arabia	8,256.60	8,317.59	60.99	▲	0.74	14.26				
Dubai	3,079.51	3,061.97	-17.54	▼	-0.57	-8.62				
Abu Dhabi	4,682.47	4,693.47	11.00	▲	0.23	6.46				
Bahrain	1,301.08	1,298.60	-2.48	▼	-0.19	-2.30				
Qatar	9,155.55	9,157.57	2.02	▲	0.02	7.42				
Oman	4,761.05	4,756.03	-5.02	▼	-0.11	-6.63				
Lebanon	1,137.53	1,137.53	0.00	-	0.00	-0.96				
Jordan	2,174.08	2,188.79	14.71	▲	0.68	2.22				
Egypt	17,898.09	18,074.32	176.23	▲	0.98	19.17				
Morocco	12,974.23	12,943.45	-30.78	▼	-0.24	4.48				
Tunisia	7,161.37	7,149.37	-12.00	▼	-0.17	14.00				
Global Currencies Exchange Rate										
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar		
Kuwaiti Dinar		12.3775	3.3146	2.7093	2.3752	3.2324	358.67	4.3361		
Saudi Riyal	0.08079		0.2678	0.2189	0.1919	0.2611	28.98	0.3503		
US Dollar	0.30170	3.7343		0.8174	0.9752	108.21	1.3082			
Euro	0.36910	4.5685	1.2234		0.8769	1.1932	132.41	1.6006		
Sterling Pound	0.42102	5.2112	1.3955	1.1404		1.3612	151.02	1.8260		
Swiss Franc	0.30937	3.8293	1.0254	0.8381	0.7346		110.99	1.3415		
Japanese Yen	0.00279	0.0345	0.0092	0.0076	0.0064	0.0090		0.0121		
Australian Dollar	0.23062	2.8545	0.7644	0.6248	0.5476	0.7454	82.72			
MENA Currencies Exchange Rate										
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound		
US Dollar		0.30170	3.7343	0.3741	3.6270	0.3831	3.6574	17.6400		
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.3146		12.3775	1.2399	12.0219	1.2699	12.1226	58.4687		
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08079		0.1002	0.9713	0.1026	0.9794	4.7238		
Bahraini Dinar	2.6732	0.80649	9.9824		9.6955	1.0242	9.7768	47.1544		
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08318	1.0296	0.1031		0.1056	1.0084	4.8635		
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.78746	9.7468	0.9764	9.4668		9.5461	46.0418		
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08249	1.0210	0.1023	0.9917	0.1048		4.8231		
Egyptian Pound	0.0567	0.01710	0.2117	0.0212	0.2056	0.0217	0.2073			
Global Interest Rates										
Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year					
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.25	1.75	2.00	2.19	2.44					
US Dollar	1.74	1.89	2.35	2.51	2.76					
Euro	-0.42	-0.40	-0.36	-0.32	-0.24					
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.53	0.75	0.85	1.02					
Swiss Franc	-0.80	-0.78	-0.73	-0.65	-0.51					
Australian Dollar	1.66	1.87	1.82	1.83	1.89					
Japanese Yen	-0.04	-0.04	-0.03	0.02	0.12					
Global Bond Yields										
Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year						
United States	2.47	2.82	2.98	3.17						
Europe	-0.54	-0.01	0.62	1.28						
United Kingdom	0.83	1.18	1.52	1.92						
Commodities										
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %					
Kuwait Oil	69.78	69.60	-0.18	▼	-0.26	9.04				
Brent	75.38	75.71	0.33	▲	0.44	11.01				
West Texas	68.31	68.21	-0.10	▼	-0.15	11.49				
Gold	1334.72	1328.01	-6.71	▼	-0.50	2.41				
Silver	17.11	16.93	-0.18	▼	-1.05	0.96				

Business

1 in 2 professionals in Kuwait seeking employment in a new industry: Survey

Over 60,000 job applications are submitted on Bayt.com everyday

KUWAIT: The most recent "Top Industries in the Middle East and North Africa" survey was just released by Bayt.com, the number one job site in the Middle East, and YouGov, a pioneer in online market research, revealing that one in every two (47 percent) Kuwait professionals are considering an industry change in the next few months. This is in spite of the fact that only one in five (22 percent) respondents report having changed industries during the last two years.

The desire to find a new job, switch current career or industry altogether is also translating to heavier online activities. Bayt.com reported that over 60,000 job applications are submitted on the job site every day and over 15,000 new professionals join the Bayt.com platform on a daily basis.

Amongst those considering an industry change in Kuwait, the most appealing industries include human resources (10 percent), followed by banking/finance/accounting (8 percent), real estate/ construction/ property development (8 percent) and advertising/ marketing/ public relations (6 percent). When asked about their reasons for considering an industry change, the top answers were 'better salary' (50 percent), 'better career growth' (45 percent), 'better benefits' (27 percent), and 'better work life balance' (27 percent). For those who have already changed industries, the most common reasons for having done so were a 'better salary in the new industry' (47 percent), 'better career growth opportunities in the new industry' (29 percent), and to 'fulfill a life-long ambition of working in a particular role' (29 percent). According to the survey, the most common industries Kuwait respondents are

currently working in or worked in most recently are banking/ finance/ accounting (11 percent), engineering/ design (11 percent), as well as real estate/ construction/ property development, and commerce/ trade/ retail (both 7 percent). Of those seeking employment in the MENA region as a whole, the most popular industries are banking/finance/accounting (11 percent), education/academia (7 percent), and engineering/ design (7 percent). When it came to satisfaction with the current or most recent industries for Kuwait respondents, more than two thirds (68 percent) said they are satisfied with the working hours, followed by work culture (65 percent), work-life balance (61 percent), and job security (54 percent).

Most attractive industries

When asked about their perception of job attributes in various industries, survey respondents claim that the best salary packages in Kuwait are found in certain industries including banking/ finance/ accounting (25 percent), military/ defense/ police (11 percent), as well as government/civil services, engineering/ design, and real estate/ construction/ property development (all 10 percent).

According to respondents, banking/finance/accounting (30 percent), government/civil service (20 percent), and education/academia (13 percent) are among the industries with the best work-life balance, while banking/finance/ accounting (24 percent) remains high on the list for having the best career growth opportunities. Further, among industries perceived to have the most optimum job security are banking/ finance/ accounting (28 percent),

The Bayt.com Top Industries Survey in the Middle East and North Africa

April 2018



government/ civil service (20 percent), and military/ defense/ police (16 percent). For survey respondents, the industries believed to have experienced the strongest growth in the past year include banking/ finance/ accounting (24 percent), real estate/ construction/ property development (16 percent), IT/ Internet/ e-commerce (15 percent), and telecommunications (15 percent). "Here in the MENA, we are seeing a collective push towards the diversification of the regional economy and the establishment of a knowledge-based economy in which a highly talented workforce is spread relatively evenly across industries," said Suhail Masri, VP of Employer Solutions, Bayt.com. "Increasingly, the most attractive industries are defined by factors that include, but extend beyond salary, such as work-life balance, opportunities for career growth, and job security. Today, job seekers are looking for employment in industries that tick every box on their job hunt checklist: and at Bayt.com, we aim to use this information to help

employers and job seekers connect more effectively. We have already witnessed a spike in job postings during the first of 2018 by more than 50 percent. The region's professionals are also very active on our jobsite, with over 15,000 daily registrations, 60,000 daily applications and CV updates. The market is very dynamic and continues to bring new and more diverse career opportunities that we always make available on Bayt.com."

In terms of the talent being attracted by various industries, those that are most attractive to women in Kuwait include banking/ finance/ accounting (28 percent), healthcare/ medical services (25 percent), and education/academia (24 percent). Meanwhile, industries attracting the most local talent include banking/finance/accounting (25 percent), government/civil service (15 percent), and engineering/ design (15 percent). As for those hiring the largest proportion of fresh graduates in Kuwait, banking/ finance/ accounting (23 per-

cent), government/ civil services (18 percent), and military/ defense/ police (16 percent).

Most challenging Industries

In Kuwait, respondents perceive the most stressful industries to be domestic services (16 percent), real estate/ construction/ property development, banking/ finance/ accounting, and healthcare/ medical services (all 14 percent). Among industries perceived to have the longest working hours, commerce/ trade/ retail (17 percent), hospitality/recreation/ entertainment (15 percent), and real estate/ construction/ property development (14 percent) emerged at the top.

"We can see from this survey that industries are becoming increasingly competitive amongst each other in terms of securing top talent in the MENA," said Nehal Jibouri, Head of Custom Research, YouGov MENA. "The difference in percentage points between the most and least appealing industries is generally small across the board, indicating that the regional workforce is quite diverse and multifaceted. We are delighted to see this trend emerge as the region evolves to become a global hub for talent and innovation, but this also calls for each individual employer to become more attentive to their branding, workplace, and methods of securing top talent."

Data for the Bayt.com "Top Industries in the Middle East and North Africa" survey was conducted between 14 February 2018 and 29 March 2018 with 3,561 respondents from the UAE, KSA, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

Lufthansa partners with Boodai Aviation to open its new sales booth at 'Souk Safar'



KUWAIT: Lufthansa, the only European 5-Star airline partners with Boodai Aviation, one of the leading travel agencies in Kuwait to open a brand-new sales booth at the "Souk Safar" in the heart of the city. This new one-stop travel shop is aimed to create an easy reachable and comfortable environment located in one of the most prestigious and largest shopping malls in the Middle East "The Avenues".

The "Souk Safar" is spread across 1,100 square meters and brings together various international airline sales offices, reputable hotel chains, car rental companies, tourism boards and a visa application center in one location, allowing customers to book their entire travel plans under one roof. A team of dedicated staff will be managing the booth and catering to Lufthansa customers year-round on a daily basis. "Kuwait remains to be a very important

market for us and this is just another example of how Lufthansa continues to improve the customer experience and redesign products and services around customer needs", said Karsten Zang, Senior Director Sales Gulf, I R Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, Lufthansa Group. During the opening ceremony, Stefan Schwarz, General Manager Sales Kuwait, Lufthansa Group mentioned, "This is one of the biggest partnerships we have done in Kuwait and we are very proud to team up with Boodai to open the first ever one-stop travel shop in Kuwait." The airline continues to create innovative travel solutions for customers in the Middle East.

Special promotional offers and fun activities will be available for customers visiting the sales booth, including the chance to win free Lufthansa tickets. The booth will be open daily from 10 AM until 10 PM.

The Huawei Y7 prime is your ultimate photography buddy

KUWAIT: Long gone are the days where the term 'cheap phone' was a warning rather than a tempting proposition. Today's market has changed. And today's consumer is changing. The era of over-indulgence has slowly given way to a time of carefully-considered purchasing. Today, HUAWEI gives the opportunity to everyone to get their hands on a smartphone with amazing features without having to spend a fortune.

Meet the new HUAWEI Y7 prime, a low-cost phone with a FullView Display, a dual camera, amazing photography features, and the very popular Face Unlock.

Exciting social feed

HUAWEI Y7 Prime delivers much better functions and experiences than most fashionable "photography addicts" have imagined, making it truly stylish with excellent value. It sports a 13MP+2MP dual rear camera with stunning wide aperture. The 13MP camera mainly takes photos whereas the 2MP camera provides bokeh effects with up to 7 aperture level for users to select from.

And for you to enjoy every moment, the HUAWEI Y7 Prime also allows you to refocus after the photo is taken! It also features an 8MP front camera with the advanced selfie toning flash, which automatically detects the lighting on your face and intelligently adjust the level of brightness for a natural-looking selfie, even in low-light conditions. And not to forget the 10-level beauty mode allowing you



to take perfect selfie anytime, anywhere.

Additionally, the front camera supports AR lens modes: Change Background, and funny Cosplay, whereas the rear cameras support the function of funny Cosplay, making selfie and photo-taking more fun than ever.

FullView display

The HUAWEI Y7 Prime 2018 features a compact body with an impressive 5.99-inch HD+ (1440x720 pixels) FullView Display. The 2.5D curved glass panels give the device a premium look and feel. HUAWEI FullView Display offers a wider view with a comfortable grip, giving you a more immersive gaming, viewing and reading experience.

But a big screen doesn't necessarily mean a bulkier phone. The Y7 prime is a beautiful device with a sleek and thin body with an integrated design as well as scratch-proof durability.

Your face or your fingerprint

The new HUAWEI Y7 prime give you the freedom to choose how to unlock your phone. Are you more of traditional, fingerprint kind of person? Then go ahead and choose the Fingerprint unlock which allows you to unlock the device in less than 0.35 seconds. Are you more into trying new things and following the trend? Then you can go for the new Face Unlock feature to unlock your phone. Powered by AI facial recognition algorithm, the device will detect 1024 points of your face and perform high accuracy mapping. Your phone will be unlocked in milliseconds!

Chandra Sekhar Gembali wins KD 4,000 in Burgan Bank's value account draw

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank yesterday announced Chandra Sekhar Gembali as the winner of the Value Account KD 4,000 draw. The winner expressed his excitement of winning the cash prize of KD 4,000.

Dedicated to offer the best in-class services, Burgan Bank's Value Account presents customers with exceptional features which were specifically designed to suit the needs of expatriates living in Kuwait. Account holders will be able to enjoy matchless benefits that include receiving a free credit card for one year, application for a loan, in addition to a chance to enter the quarterly draw to win KD 4,000 as well as other discounts from selected merchant stores.

Burgan Bank will continue presenting exclusive services and draws with an aim of exceeding customers' expectations while offering them chances to win valuable cash prizes all year round.

Opening a Value account is simple, interested individuals with salaries starting from KD 150 and above are eligible to open a Value Account.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks. The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure,

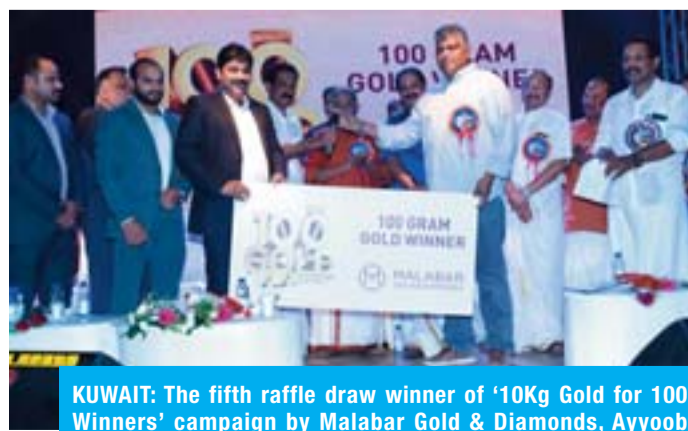


diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds holds raffle draws



The fourth raffle draw winner of '10Kg Gold for 100 Winners' campaign by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Srinivas receiving the prize 100gm Gold from Shahil - Branch Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.



KUWAIT: The fifth raffle draw winner of '10Kg Gold for 100 Winners' campaign by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Ayyoob Kachery receiving the prize 100gm Gold from Afsal Khan - Zonal Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.



KUWAIT: The sixth raffle draw winner of '10Kg Gold for 100 Winners' campaign by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Nisar receiving the prize 100gm Gold from Lukman Alavi, Deputy Branch Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds in the presence of management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds.

Technology

Online myth busters fight tide of fake news in India

It is a herculean task exposing fake news before it spreads

NEW DELHI: As grief and outrage over the rape and murder of an eight-year-old crescendoed in India last week, a wrenching video of the supposed victim singing "her last song" lit up phones across the country. But it was a hoax. The clip was nearly a year old and the girl someone entirely different, a lie that was discovered by a team of fact checkers who debunk the "fake news" shared by millions of Indians every day.

It is a herculean task exposing fake news before it spreads like wildfire in India, where an estimated quarter of a billion people use Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media platforms. Small teams of myth busters must compete with huge volumes of content being shared in a multitude of languages, in many cases by first-time internet users unskilled in discerning fact from fiction.

Independent fact checkers know the stakes are especially high in India, where fake news has quickly ignited violence. Erroneous rumors of a salt shortage sparked panic across four states in November, triggering stampedes outside marketplaces that left one woman dead and countless injured. Angry mobs in eastern India beat seven men to death in May after they were accused of child trafficking in unverified messages circulated on social media.

Velocity creates veracity

Govindraj Ethiraj, founder and editor of Boom, a fact-checking website, said his team encountered at least a dozen instances of fake news a day "that can cause serious harm". "India is perhaps the only country where there are such violent outcomes of fake news," he said. "The way it manifests itself in India, I don't think it happens in any other country. We are worst affected by this menace." Boom, which revealed the viral clip of the alleged child rape victim to be a fake, has just six people on its staff and is one

of a handful of independent fact-checking teams in India.

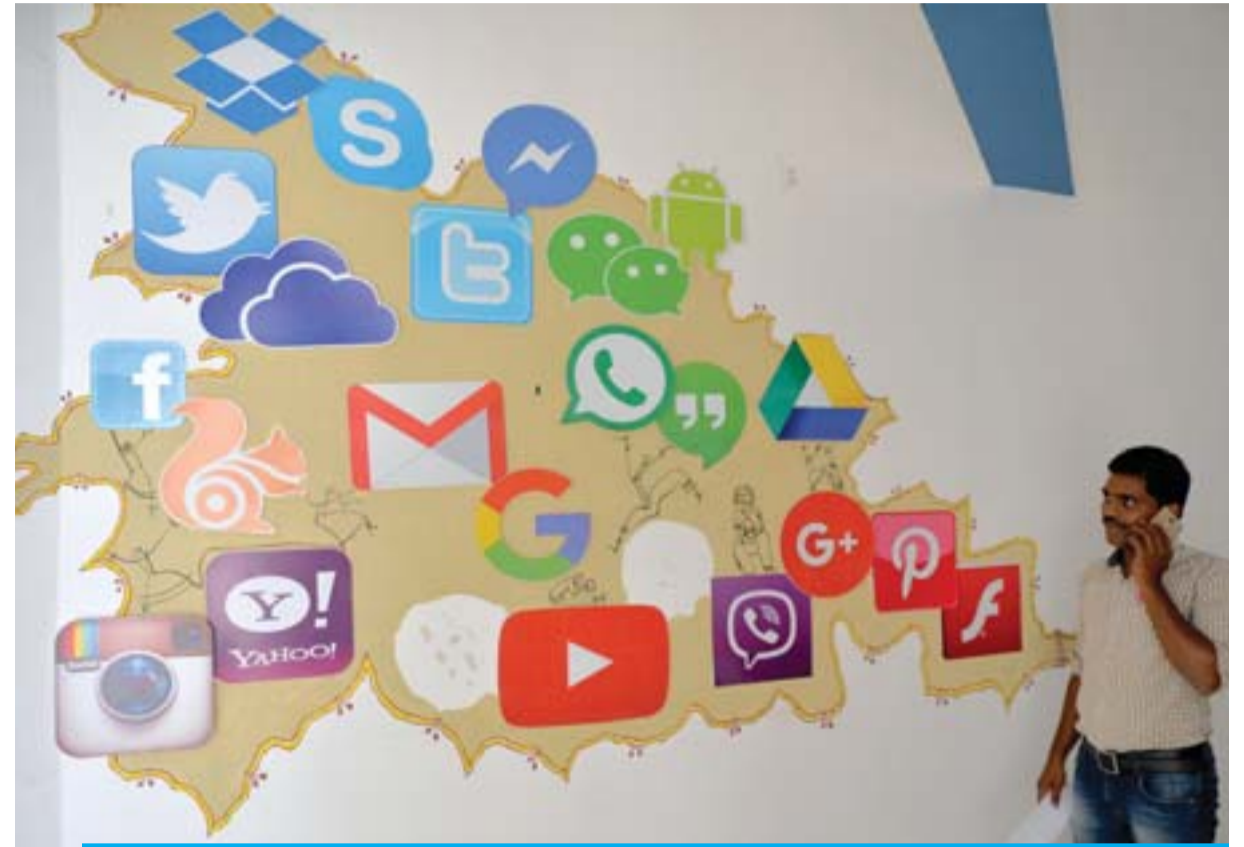
Facebook this week announced a partnership with Boom to monitor state polls in Karnataka, its first such initiative in India, as the social media giant faces global scrutiny over its platform being misused to meddle in elections. India is one of the world's largest and fastest-growing internet markets, with just over a third of its 1.25 billion people connected to the web.

Cheap data packages and inexpensive smartphones are bringing millions of new users online who are often unable to detect real news from fake, said Pratik Sinha, founder of "anti-propaganda site" AltNews. "Suddenly people, especially from rural areas, are inundated with information and are unable to distinguish what is real from what is not," he said. "They tend to believe whatever is sent to them."

Many of the hoaxes debunked by AltNews have incendiary potential: false allegations of low-caste Indians going on a destructive rampage, or Hindu women being taunted by Muslims in a hotbed state. Ethiraj said this content often swirled "in corners of the country that we don't even know about", going viral in one of India's myriad regional languages. Once it takes off, it can be hard to stop: "Velocity creates veracity. People start believing it," he said. It was a problem that "lawmakers and the police are finding difficult to deal with", Ethiraj added.

Photoshopped pictures

Prime Minister Narendra Modi this month reversed an order to punish journalists found guilty of reporting fake news after an outcry over press freedom. Some government ministers from the Hindu right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have fallen foul of fake news. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tweeted about an Oscar-winning music director supporting a BJP curb on cow slaughter,



BANGALORE: In this file photo taken on March 22, 2018 an Indian visitor passes a mural depicting various social media companies including Facebook and Twitter inside a building. —AFP

later conceding the information "seems unverified".

Cow slaughter is a hot-button issue in India as the majority Hindus consider the animal sacred. A photo of Modi sweeping a floor went viral ahead of the 2014 election he won with a thumping mandate. It was later revealed the image was doctored. A year later, an image of Modi surveying flood damage was pulled from a govern-

ment website after being exposed as photoshopped. Pankaj Jain, founder of SMHoaxslayer.com, said the rise of fake news presented challenges ahead of India's 2019 general election and it was important to present the truth to the people. "They need to be shown the truth in the way in which they consume (news) most like regional language channels and newspapers," he said. —AFP

Facebook rejects Australia media calls for regulation

SYDNEY: Tech giant Facebook has opposed calls by Australian media companies for digital platforms to be regulated, amid an inquiry into their impact on competition in news and advertising markets. The government tasked the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission earlier this year with assessing whether platforms such as Facebook and Google were using their market power in commercial dealings to the detriment of users, news media and advertisers.

Australian media groups, like their peers worldwide, are losing circulation and advertising revenues to digital competitors. Australian media tycoon Kerry Stokes, the head of major commercial broadcaster Seven, on Monday urged Canberra to take "serious action" against the two online titans. "The government must act decisively to curtail the frightening power and influence these companies have," Stokes told The Australian newspaper. "The duopoly of Facebook and Google now control over 80 percent of the global digital ad market, taking away advertising dollars from local media without any of the controls and rules we must adhere to, creating an uneven playing field."

The industry body representing commercial free-to-air television networks, Free TV Australia, echoed such views in its submission Friday, saying the two companies were virtual monopolies but had "very little regulatory oversight". The inquiry comes at a sensitive time for Facebook, which has come under fire globally after it admitted that the personal data of up to 87 million people worldwide—including more than 300,000 Australians—were improperly shared with a British political consultancy.

Facebook said in its submission to the inquiry on Wednesday, sent to AFP Monday, that rapid technological changes such as media digitalisation "makes them a challenging subject for regulatory intervention". The American firm added that "consumers often have the most to gain from market disruptions caused by technological change and the most to lose from interventions that are designed to protect particular business models from the effects of those changes".

Google, which released its submission to the inquiry Monday, said it was consumers who would determine the future of news and added that it partnered with publishers such as Australia's Fairfax Media to support access to information. "Changes in consumer and marketing behaviour have profound implications for traditional news business models. But they do not mean the death of journalism," Google Australia managing director Jason Pellegrino said in a statement. The competition commission is expected to publish its preliminary report in December, with the final report due in mid-2019. —AFP



CAPITOL HILL: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg arrives to testify before a joint hearing of the US Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and Senate Judiciary Committee. —AFP

SAMENA Telecom Leaders' Summit to be held in Dubai

KUWAIT: The SAMENA Telecommunications Council and Huawei, a leading global ICT solutions provider, are set to host the annual Telecom Leaders' Summit in Dubai on 3 May, 2018. Held under the theme "Building the Digital Economy of the Middle East", the one-day event is a platform for private and government sector leaders in the telecommunications sector to discuss opportunities and challenges the industry faces.

The summit's aim is to enable the framing of practicable ICT strategies, to help reap maximum, long-term socio-economic benefit through a well-defined digital agenda and adoption of national and sector-specific digitization policies. The event will encourage participants to discuss policies that can drive progress of telecom sector governance and regulation in the region to support the evolving scope, dynamics, and needs of the telecommunications industry, while ensuring its path to growth and sustainability.

"This is a transformative time in the ICT industry," said Bocar BA, CEO of SAMENA Telecommunications Council. "As the Middle East continues on its march towards digital

The evolving use of mobile payment systems in Kuwait

By Ahmad Al-Hajri

The payment of goods and services has evolved over time from the physical exchange of coins and notes, cheque writing to online payment by transferring card details using devices such as mobile phones and personal digital assistant (PDA). Currently, the payment can now be made through mobile devices which is referred to as mobile payment. Growth in technology and emergence of e-commerce has progressively digitalized the mobile payment. This new technology of mobile payment has brought many benefits to buyers and sellers, service providers and many other platforms where payment transactions are required.

This paper seeks to research on the mobile payment system (Ramezani, 2008). The technology has digitalized many aspects of life. Today, the globalization has affected many spheres of life ranging from learning, socializing, trading, and business among others. The physical movement of people has also reduced as a result of technology, one can access whatever service from a comfort of their niche. Due to this technological development, the e-commerce and online market-

transformation, it is vital for governments and telecommunications leaders to align on their visions and create a roadmap that will enable the region to reap the full benefits of digitalization. We are pleased to collaborate with Huawei once gain to organize the summit and hope that all participants will walk away from the event with valuable insights on how to move forward in these exciting times."

On the sidelines of the SAMENA Telecom Leader's Summit, Huawei will organize three sub-forums, with the first "5G is Now.." focusing on the imminent arrival of 5G and its support to national transformation plans across the region, in addition to the big role 5G will play in the digital transformation journey. The 5G era is growing close, and preparation is necessary to build up network spectrum, transport, sites and business cases, in order to facilitate its approach. Middle East operators and government agencies must work to support spectrum neutrality, use test-driven development to construct Mobile Broadband networks, in order to rollout 5G as fast as possible. The sub-forum will be an opportunity for Huawei and other ICT leaders to discuss how to address remaining challenges and opportunities on the road to 5G.

Huawei will also present the latest edition of its annual Global Connectivity Index (GCI), a global study that benchmarks where a country stands within its journey to connectivity, and aims to deliver insightful research for governments looking to push forth a digital economy transformation. The 2018 edition of GCI will feature 80 countries, including several in the Middle East, and pro-



Charles Yang - President Huawei Middle East

unlocking economic growth and 5G is the main driver of this transformation," said Charles Yang, President of Huawei Middle East. "Huawei is ushering in the 5G era by laying the groundwork for new networks, developing 5G commercial devices, and nurturing an ecosystem of telco organizations, vendors, and consumers prepared to seize new opportunities. The arrival of 5G will support national plans and accelerate digital transformation, and the SAMENA conference is a great occasion to gather ICT industry leaders to discuss challenges and opportunities on the road to 5G."

has elevated the mobile banking system. The mobile payment technology comes handy to reduce physical robbery of money since payment is made online with less physical movement. Thus the shift from physical payment to virtual payment has brought much security to merchants. However, it also gives mobile service providers and operators more responsibility to provide security and interoperability. Besides mentioning the security in mobile payment and easy accessibility to services, mobile payment is also faster than physical payment. The digitalized life has made the aspects of life faster than before. Gone are the days to waste time on long queues to issue physical payments. The mobile payment is faster and easy. Kuwait is a commercialized nation with many businesses. The businesses agencies have adopted mobile payment system to provide security, ease and faster mode of payment to the customers.

Rational for the research

Kuwaitis are well known to embrace new innovations in the current faster-growing technology. Today, the exciting innovation is known as Tap and Pay is modern mobile payment system where boubyan subscribers can pay for services and goods effortlessly. About 80 percent population of Kuwaitis are accessible to a mobile phone and have the literate know how to operate a mobile phone and other devices.

Contribution to the research and findings

Having analyzed the research findings from 40 questionnaires given to Kuwait citizens, it can be confirmed that all three hypotheses formulated in the research proposal can be

accepted. For hypothesis 1: Mobile usability has affected mobile payment system positively. Data from research shows that 100% of respondents own mobile phones and 67% knows how to use the mobile phones thus they can easily use mobile payment system. Furthermore, hypothesis 2: Many Kuwaitis are not aware of the mobile payment system was a negative hypothesis. The research findings show that 92% of respondents are aware of the mobile payment system in Kuwait. Lastly, Hypothesis 3: Security is a threat to the mobile payment system can be confirmed. The data shows that majority of the respondents own mobile phones and are aware of the mobile payment system but only 10% use the mobile payment daily. This shows that there is fear to use the mobile payment. The research on security shows that 53% of the respondents agree that the system is not secure as some have lost money. The findings of this research thus give a true picture and state of the mobile payment system in Kuwait.

Limitations of the research

This research study had some limitations. First, the sample size used was small to represent the state of Kuwait population, at least 100 sample population can give a true representation of peoples' views and opinions on the mobile payment system. Secondly, since the topic of research is of great interest, time allocated was limited to exhaust the survey. Time for issuing questionnaires and collecting was not enough. Lastly, much information was required to fully exploit the study. For instance, interview with mobile operators and network providers about the security of mobile payment system



Health

DHAMAN, IBM to establish an advanced technological healthcare system in Kuwait

Digital Health Roadmap Initiative to digitize the healthcare sector

KUWAIT: In a pioneering step made in line with Kuwait's development plan and Vision 2035 "New Kuwait", Health Assurance Hospitals Company (DHAMAN) yesterday signed a Strategic Partnership Agreement with multinational technology company IBM, for the development of the Digital Health System and the launch of the Kuwait Digital Health Roadmap Initiative. Through the agreement DHAMAN aims to become a regional leader in the technological healthcare sector by 2020.

Opening the doors for further cooperation and the development of the industry in Kuwait through IBM's breakthrough technology and world-renowned experience: DHAMAN will establish a Digital Health System and launch the Kuwait Digital Health Roadmap Initiative to advance and digitize the healthcare sector including the management of Electronic Medical records and providing high-quality services to all beneficiaries in a professional and efficient manner. The agreement aims to achieve a qualitative leap in the quality of services provided to the public to increase efficiency, reduce operational costs and waste, and optimize capital assets and equipment. It will also link and integrate different departments at Kuwait's Ministry of Health, which will permit the ministry to monitor health facilities and real time performance management.

An ambitious strategic vision

Undersecretary for the Ministry of Health, Dr Mohammad Al Khashti said: "This initiative between Dhaman and IBM is a strategic step in the direction of reformation as the technological solutions and outputs expected from it will serve as a launching pad of innovative ideas to further develop quality, standards and ease of access to services in the healthcare sector in Kuwait. I commend Dhaman and IBM for their initiative and hope it will be the beginning of enhancing the digital healthcare system for the benefit of the community." IBM is ranked as one of the top 10 brands influencing the world's economy, and is one of the largest technology, digital health, and artificial intelligence companies in the world.

DHAMAN CEO and Board Member, Dr Ahmad Al-Saleh said: "Since our establishment, DHAMAN has put forth an ambitious strategic vision and technical plans to become a leader in the healthcare sector. This vision can only be achieved by the full integration of healthcare with the Information Technology (IT) sector to enable us to achieve our goals and provide a unique experience to

beneficiaries through unified access across all services. It will also enable us to establish a state-of-the-art technical and practical platform that meet international standards in health. "DHAMAN is proud to present a national vision through the 'Kuwait Digital Health Roadmap Initiative' offering a better future to Kuwaiti citizens. The partnership with IBM will enable DHAMAN to connect with international and innovative institutes and centers around the world and stay up-to-date with the latest advancements in technology and healthcare. The roadmap will feature a unified e-health file, infrastructure for cloud services, access to health services through multiple channels, and establish a medical decision support system and artificial intelligence systems in addition to the development of public health systems, awareness, and preventive solutions.

Setting the criteria

"IBM will provide project management and consulting services to DHAMAN through the establishment of a full-integrated digital system that will accommodate Primary Healthcare Centres and Secondary Healthcare Hospitals geographically spread across Kuwait. Setting the criteria to reach HIMSS Analytics Stage 7 and continuing to work towards establishing DHAMAN as a leading digital health organization in the Middle East by 2020. HIMSS Analytics(r) is a global healthcare IT market intelligence, research and standards organization that tracks and benchmarks technological progress against other healthcare organizations.

This comes in addition to signing an agreement with JCI, an international non-profit organization and the oldest and largest accreditation organization in the field of healthcare in the world, to strengthen and enable core activities to meet standards in clinical care, effective leadership, safe facility management and continuous quality improvement. Our local strategic partner Arabi Holding Company is working tirelessly to provide the support needed to achieve our goals and overcome the challenges in order for us to contribute towards the development of the healthcare sector in Kuwait."

DHAMAN Information Technology Director, Eng Abdullah Al-Najjar said: "The modern interactive technologies to be provided by this agreement will offer beneficiaries with unified access to all services and securely automate all internal and external operations, which in

return will achieve the strategic objectives of managing the public's health. DHAMAN has set a strategy to healthcare and a roadmap to implement the EMR Adoption Model (EMRAM), which aims to achieve minimal paper use and harness technology to support and improve patient care.

Our partnership with IBM is divided into two phases: the first of which is offering consulting services to help transform DHAMAN into a leading digital healthcare system in the MENA region, and the second is project management and execution of the vision. These phases in return will set the long-term agenda for the future vision

in technology through well-studied experiences and scientific methodologies, and determining the technological and strategic requirements to achieve a digital healthcare system."

DHAMAN was established in 2015 as a public-private-partnership (PPP) project with an authorized capital of KD 230 million. Government entities represented by the Kuwait Investment Authority and General Authority for Social Insurance own 24% of the company, while 26% is owned by strategic partner Arabi Holding Company. The company allocated 50% of its shares for public subscription for Kuwaiti citizens.

Ants that 'explode' to fight discovered

KUALA LUMPUR: A species of ant that "explodes" and gives off a toxic, sticky liquid to fight off foes and keep its colony safe has been discovered in the jungles of Borneo island, scientists said. The creatures, which have the scientific name *Colobopsis explodens*, were found by a team of researchers in the tiny state of Brunei, which inhabits a sliver of land in the north of the biodiverse island.

When threatened by other insects, worker ants can rupture the wall of their body, which leads to their death and the release of a yellow toxin from their glands that either kills or holds off enemies, according to the study published in journal *ZooKeys*. The scientists from Austria, Thailand and Brunei said the existence of a broad grouping of "exploding" ants was already known, but they had managed to identify several specific species in the course of their research.

The *Colobopsis explodens* was picked out as the model species of the group as it is particularly prone to self-sacrifice, they said. Alice Laciny, a scientist from Vienna Natural History Museum who was involved in the study, said the ant "explodes" by contracting "its body until enough pressure is built up to tear the body wall, then the secretion exits with a small squirt or pop".



She told AFP that such a phenomenon was "very rare in nature" and only a handful of "social" insects—such as ants and bees—were known to sacrifice themselves in such a fashion. "The colony is like a superorganism and the individual animal like a cell in a body with its special role to play," she said.

The new ant species, which lives in trees, will be an important point of reference for future study, said the researchers. The research project was led by Irina Druzhinina from Vienna Technical University. — AFP

CLINIC
PAGE

248 33 199

Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

Consultant vascular and general surgery

All general and specialized surgeries such as:

- All critical and non-critical arteries and veins surgeries
- Carrying out delicate procedures such as removing the extra rib
- All methods of treating varicose
- Treating excess perspiration
- Special department for care of injured diabetic foot
- AV connection for dialysis

مركز جلوبال الطبي
Global Medical Center

Telephone: 1871111

Global Medical Center, Bneid Al-Qar
Bour Saeed Street, Block-1, Building-128.

@globalmedcenter
www.globalmed-center.com

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368

What's On



Art exhibition by the Palestinian Culture Center

The Palestinian Culture Centre held its 48th exhibition yesterday at Women Cultural and Social Society. A large collection of traditional handmade cross-stitch fabrics were on display as well as pottery from Hebron and posters and books about Palestine in English and Arabic.

"The centre motivates women by granting bonuses for excellent quality work. It also provides support to Palestinians in the homeland by providing financial aid to needy families and university scholarships," Siham Abu Ghazaleh, in charge of the exhibition, said. Abu Ghazaleh

added "The Palestinian exhibition coincides with the day of the prisoner who suffered for years in the prisons of the Israeli occupation, also on the occasion of the return and the great march of return of our family who continues to give their lives for it."

"Our exhibition this year includes several beautiful handmade works by women and girls in Palestinian camps, and employees at the center do the cooking and sewing. The main goals of this exhibition are to preserve the rich heritage and culture of Palestine and help empower women and their families in refugee camps," Abu Ghazaleh noted.

She invited everyone to attend the exhibition in order to witness Palestine's rich heritage and history. "People can attend the exhibition without buying anything - it will be nice to tell these women that a lot of people enjoyed and loved their work. I hope everyone contributes to and enjoys this exhibition and supports these women and the protection of Palestinian history and identity," she said. The exhibition at Women Cultural and Social Society in Khalidiya will run for 4 days from yesterday through Thursday, April 26 and is open to the public from 10 am to 1:30 pm and 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm.



Gulf Bank participates in the AUM Career Fair

Gulf Bank has recently participated in the American University of the Middle East's (AUM) Career Fair, aimed at connecting students and alumni with potential career opportunities, which took place at the university's campus in Eqaila on 17 and 18 April 2018. Gulf Bank's participation and support of the Career Fair comes in line with its commitment to attract young Kuwaiti talent by being the employer of choice, reinforcing its role in supporting Kuwait's youth and the development of Kuwait's economy.

Salma Al-Hajjaj, the General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank, said, "We're proud to participate in the AUM Career Fair, where we have the chance to meet some of the best and brightest students in the country. We at Gulf Bank are committed to supporting Kuwaiti youth as well as the development of our economy." Al-Hajjaj continued, "Students can rest assured that the Bank is committed to supporting them as they start their working careers, and that the Bank is the employer of choice, placing its human capital at the forefront of its business investment. We are very much looking forward to welcoming ambitious new employees to our workforce very soon."

During the fair, Gulf Bank was represented by a team from its Human Resources department at its dedicated booth. A seminar was presented to help



guide students on how to present their CV, and included tips on what is important to conduct a successful personal interview. Students interested in working in the banking sector got the chance to receive in-depth knowledge about the Bank's renowned program AJYAL, a graduate development program dedicated to developing a cadre of holistic bankers for the Bank and for Kuwait. They were also invited to have informal open discussions with the Human Resources team regarding banking career

opportunities. Gulf Bank was also present to liaise with graduates, students, and alumni and to offer them the opportunity to apply for internships, full-time, and volunteer positions on the spot. The Bank offered its services, market insights, advice, collected CVs and helped students apply online for possible job opportunities, conducting on-site interviews with candidates. A Gulf Bank employee, and recent AUM graduate, was also on hand to talk to students about his experience working for the Bank.



KCST holds Earth Day celebrations

Kuwait College of Science and Technology organized the Earth Day celebration under the patronage of the university's President, Professor Khalid Al-Begain; organized by the Student Support Committee at the university campus. The President of the University called on all students to participate in this event by planting flowers on campus to encourage students to take care of the environment, and appreciate our natural resources. He also insisted on the need to participate in such global events, and for each of us to be active on improving the environmental role, and work to protect our blessed lands, and natural wealth.

Professor Khalid Al-Begain opened the event, and planted the first rose. Doctor of Islamic Civilization, Mubarak Al-Enezi, also participated. The Chairman of the Student Support Committee, Mohammed Bouabas said that the

event was very well received by the students who came to cultivate the roses, and stressing their role in preserving the environment. He also praised all the participations by the faculty, which always interacted with students in all events and celebrations outside the classroom because of its positive impact in the hearts of our children.



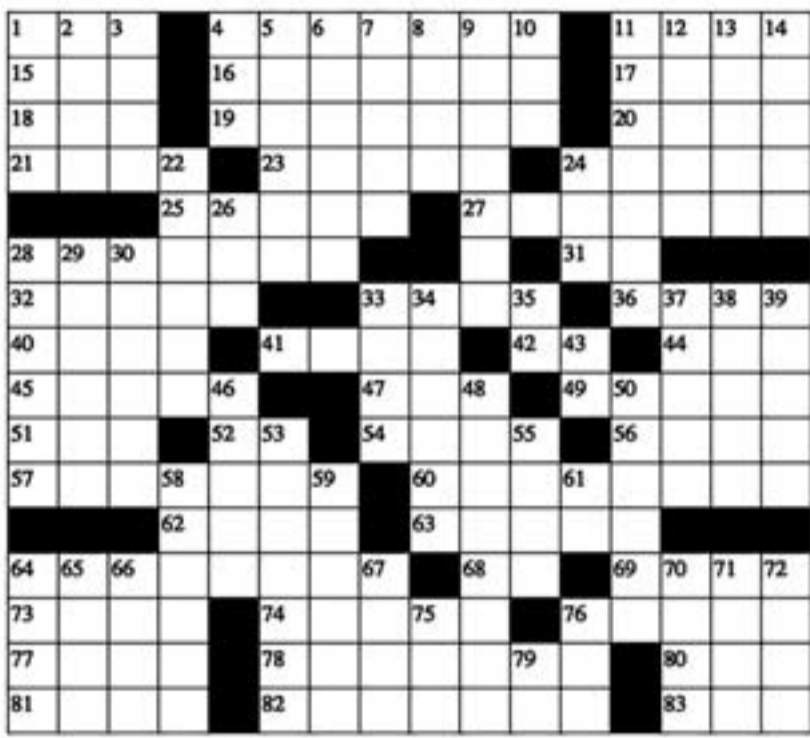
Universal Institute launches Islamic Banking Course

Universal Institute for Private Training launches IBanker program in collaboration with MIT and FGA Global. Universal Institute is an established name in Kuwait for the last 12 years. The institute was started and is managed by a group of professionals in the field of engineering and entrepreneurship with a mission to enable, students, professionals, institutions and corporates, to achieve greater success by providing knowledge, technical skills and trainings. The institute is recognized by Kuwait Ministry of Education.



It has supported more than 3000 individuals through different courses. The IBanker program offers 3 months certificate course and 3 months executive diploma course on Islamic banking. This program was held on April 14, 2018 at Radisson Blu Hotel. It was attended by high ranking dignitaries of Kuwait from Islamic and Conventional banking backgrounds. A large number of parents and students who wish to attend the IBanker course were also present in the program. The program began with the recitation of Holy Quran by Mr. Abdul Rahman from the verse of Surah Baqara in which Allah has emphasized on the prohibition of ushery. It was then followed by welcome speech by Syeda Fathima of Universal Institute. A detailed presentation was given by MD and CEO of MIT and FGA Global Mohammad Ikram Thowfeeq on Islamic banking concepts. The audience showed great interest in the subject and had a number of their voluntary questions which were answered through an interactive session.

CROSSWORD 1891



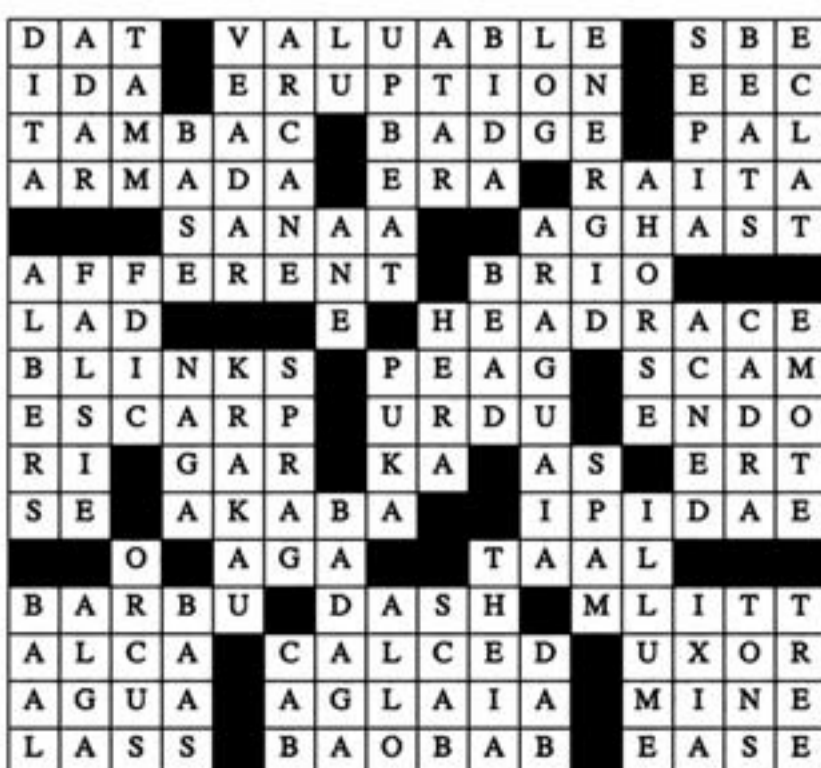
ACROSS

1. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
4. The great hall in ancient Persian palaces.
11. Fabric dyed with splotches of green and brown and black and tan.
15. A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
16. An anticholinergic drug (trade name Daricon) used in treating peptic ulcers.
17. Advanced in years.
18. A young woman making her debut into society.
19. (usually in the plural) Underpants worn by men.
20. A network of intersecting blood vessels or intersecting nerves or intersecting lymph vessels.
21. Not only so, but.
23. Naturally having skin of a dark color.
25. A large body of water constituting a principal part of the hydrosphere.
27. A member of the Sioux people formerly inhabiting an area along the Missouri river in western North Dakota.
28. A horn attached to the gunwale of a boat that holds the oar in place and acts as a fulcrum for rowing.
31. Before noon.
32. Composed of or covered with relatively large particles.
36. American novelist (1909-1955).
40. Formerly a large constellation in the southern hemisphere between Canis Major and the Southern Cross.
41. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
42. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
44. An extension at the end and at right angles to the main building.
45. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
47. The residue that remains when something is burned.
49. Any of a number of tiny parallel grooves such as.
51. A reptile genus of Iguanidae.
52. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
54. Precipitation of ice pellets when there are strong rising air currents.
56. Shattered or torn up or torn apart violently as by e.g. wind or lightning or explosive.
57. One million bits.
60. Having been introduced to something new.
62. Tall New Zealand timber tree.
63. (folklore) A corpse that rises at night to drink the blood of the living.
64. One of four equal parts.
68. A soft silvery metallic element.
69. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
73. A small island.
74. (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
77. A strip of land projecting into a body of water.
78. The capital of Tajikistan.
80. The dialect of Chinese spoken in Canton and neighboring provinces and in Hong Kong and elsewhere outside China.
81. A small cave (usually with attractive features).
82. Small creeping evergreen shrubs.
83. A doctor's degree in education.

DOWN

1. United States showman famous for his Wild West Show (1846-1917).
2. Widely cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions for its fragrant flowers and colorful fruits.
3. A small cake leavened with yeast.
4. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
5. A unit of astronomical length based on the distance from Earth at which stellar parallax is 1 second of arc.
6. A member of a widespread group of Amerindians living in northeastern South America.
7. A Muslim council of state.
8. Type genus of the Aceraceae.
9. A wind from the north.
10. The part of the nervous system of vertebrates that controls involuntary actions of the smooth muscles and heart and glands.
11. Type genus of the Carimidae comprising only the crested cariamia.
12. An active and efficient cause.
13. (Canadian) A half-breed of white and Indian parentage.
14. A port city of south central Ukraine on an arm of the Black Sea.
22. A very loud utterance (like the sound of an animal).
24. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
26. Affectedly modest or shy especially in a playful or provocative way.
29. Expose to fresh air, as of old clothing.
30. A motley assortment of things.
33. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
34. Attack someone physically or emotionally.
35. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
37. Small genus of hairy herbs with yellow flowers.
38. Intelligence derived from non-communications electromagnetic radiations from foreign sources (other than radioactive sources).
39. Fill with high spirits.
43. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
46. An established custom.
48. A major school of Buddhism teaching personal salvation through one's own efforts.
50. Sorting and allocating aid on the basis of need for or likely benefit from medical treatment or food.
53. Sweetened beverage of lime juice and water.
55. One of the jointed appendages of an animal used for locomotion or grasping.
58. The act of apprehending (especially apprehending a criminal).
59. The lap consisting of a turned-back hem encircling the end of the sleeve or leg.
61. A light strong gray lustrous corrosion-resistant metallic element used in strong light-weight alloys (as for airplane parts).
65. A person who makes use of a thing.
66. In addition.
67. Not final or absolute.
70. Make amends for.
71. (computer science) A data transmission rate (bits/second) for modems.
72. In bed.
75. A periodic paperback publication.
76. Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
79. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

The week opens with good energy for you. Your performance in an early meeting brings confidence and positive attitudes regarding a new project or plan. You gain support for the suggestions you make regarding new methods of operating. Later in the morning you discover a helpful hint about the working of new software or perhaps this is a new security system. The day drags as you long for the end of it to come; time sometimes drags when we are anxious. Someone turns to you for help concerning a very personal situation; think about this as what you don't want to get caught in a lie. The heavens are aligned to bring you insight to what the cause is for this problem. Enjoy your evening knowing you have come to the aid of someone dear.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You long to find enjoyment and relief from daily pressure. The fun and entertaining activities in life hold a strong appeal; a chance to get away may present itself from a surprising source. This is a good period to share time with loved ones or those who know you very well; the outside world can wait for a bit, no worries. Your thoughts are your own as you review some past activities you'd rather not share with anyone; these are your cherished memories, and you're entitled to them. Your support system is valuable now as you realize exactly who's on your side and who's not. Tonight an unexpected visitor delivers dinner and a movie; you're due to take some time for yourself and let others do for you what you normally do for them.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your good qualities are well known by many; someone who cares for and respects you lends a kind ear and agrees with your opinion. You may feel prickly and not in the mood to be with those who irritate you; remember it's not a bad thing to do what's best for you. Working through inner turmoil is called for and positive vibrations are available to help with this. Your good taste and quirky ways are strong and influence your ideas. This is a good time to create new ways of doing something most people have to do; a successful invention could be indicated. Being outdoors brings good energy. Your evening goes smoothly as you find that you're ahead of schedule on something important around the house. Relax and be happy this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

The feelings of others take precedence today as your sensitivities are in tune with those around you. Communication to large numbers of people is done with ease and clarity today; many look to you for leadership. Remain honest with yourself as you learn more about cosmic or mystic questions you may have regarding oracles such as tarot cards or rune stones. Just because you have never tried something doesn't mean it's not worth taking a look at. Someone could object to your style or opinions. Avoid arguments with those who reject change and/or growth; they're usually afraid of new ways of thinking such as you now actively seek. Your inner workings become clearer as you continue educating yourself about new thoughts and theories.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are able to influence others with ease. Words flow as you express your thoughts and ideas to others who are looking for answers. An in-depth conversation with loved ones relays encouraging news. Something you say could reveal your plans to the wrong person; take care. Some members of your circle disagree with a life choice you make; perhaps they can't break away from old ways and ideas but they're also worth listening to! An argument you could avoid but choose not to could result in long lasting emotional wounds. Tread lightly around a sensitive situation at home that you have instigated and made worse; it's okay to be wrong once in a while. Take a yin yoga class this evening for the most optimum sleep you have had in a long time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Cleansing is an empowering, positive event you should enjoy and welcome; there could, however, be some parts that are difficult. People who aren't good for themselves ask to join you for a celebration; while you have learned a powerful lesson, and choose to stay away from them, so have they; if they're capable and if they have not learned, you can send them off to teach someone else! The areas affected by shedding outmoded energy are: finances, associations, physical well-being and attitudes. Your focus on a positive future won't be distracted or knocked off-track. Hold tightly to your logic as you fight the urge to daydream and wish the day away. Friends pull you out of your haze by insisting on a visit to the theater to take in a newly released movie.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your mind isn't on the work of the day, but instead lingers upon your hopes and wishes and if-ones. Important tasks await your attention and you make progress quickly as you're the best at what you do! You have worked hard to get where you are, but personal circumstances threaten to dominate your time and energy. You insist on the sex life you need and could reconsider your current source if those needs aren't met; this could also indicate an emotional need not being filled. Be mindful your current phase can create an energy of wanting to control things; beware the tendency to become a control freak. A daring challenge later this evening just might unnerve you and possibly cause a deep rift between friends depending on how you handle it.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your passions run high and demand fulfillment. This energy could be directed at political, religious, social or emotional/sexual matters. Your mental and emotional considerations undergo transformation down to the cellular level; you refuse to deal with hurt feelings or anyone who attempts to make you feel guilty. You choose to address things directly and honestly for this is the only true path to peace and productivity; the stars are aligned for organization and things being put right on every level. A new customer or client represents a prosperous project or association. Your ability to take care of business in a timely manner is well known and much appreciated. Pay attention to the vibrations of in-born intuition regarding choices.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

The urge to nourish and care for others could lead you to adopt a pet or perhaps even take in a foster child. You desire to share your many blessings with others. Your ways are not those of tradition, you prefer to work smarter not harder. You might receive criticism from someone older! You're invited to a quick lunch by someone who respects you. You get your message across perfectly at a meeting you dreaded and receive respect for your input. You figure out what causes a problem between coworkers; you know how to repair this without causing any problems. Going with the flow is effortless for you during the new cycle you have entered; you eagerly join in a fun hobby with several nice new friends you have become fond of.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your intuitive side indicates that something worrisome could be on the horizon. Tap into this and create positive energy in its place for a more acceptable outcome. Visually appealing things are available for purchase today; you find one item you'll treasure forever. Congratulations! Time seems to slip away as you rush to complete a project on deadline; focus and don't allow frustration or panic to rule you. You can overcome whatever restrictions you encounter. Friends need your help on a tricky domestic project that could end up requiring quite a bit of time but end in total success. You sit back and watch someone. You're unfulfilled in the romance department; you can definitely do something about this if you truly wish.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

This is not the time for giving advice; you could feel the strong desire to stay near home and hearth sharing time with loved ones. There could be a problem with someone you care for; do you feel like a beautiful bird in a gilded cage, longing for freedom only you can change your circumstances; take a few moments and listen to your heart. If you need encouragement, accept it from a kind person who has your best interests at heart today. You could realize that someone has been avoiding you, figure out the role you have played in this. Someone could be offended by something new you're trying. You could have a deep conversation with someone you respect. Perhaps a movie or delicious dinner out with someone who thinks as you do tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your new attitudes and goals don't fit with your current work situation. You may experience thoughts of changing the field you work in; if you're in retail you may want to change to food, for example, but whatever the change is, it's near! You could have to use other, primitive methods of communicating. Confrontation with younger people could prove very unpleasant; this is a result of children growing into adulthood. There could be some strong disagreements but remember who's in charge and who's not; if this isn't with children, elders are indicated. Someone comments on your excellent taste or attitude. Pulling things together in an organized way helps reach your goals of rearranging and creating perfect fungus.

Wordsearch Puzzle

USA Presidents Word Search

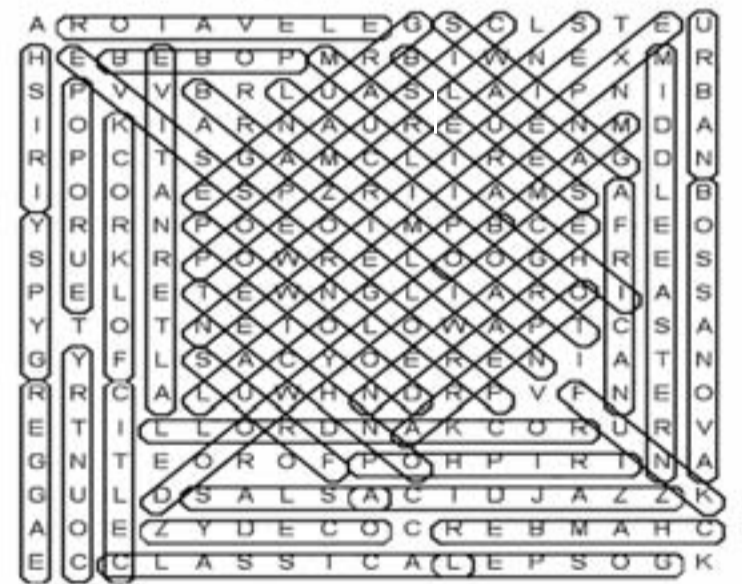
Find and circle all of the United States Presidents that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Abraham Lincoln quotation.



- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| WASHINGTON | TAYLOR | B HARRISON | KENNEDY |
| J ADAMS | FILLMORE | HICKINLEY | L JOHNSON |
| JEFFERSON | PIERCE | T ROOSEVELT | HIXON |
| MADISON | BUCHANAN | TAFT | FORD |
| MONROE | LINCOLN | WILSON | CARTER |
| J Q ADAMS | A JOHNSON | HARDING | REAGAN |
| JACKSON | GRANT | COOLIDGE | G H W BUSH |
| VAN BUREN | HAYES | HOOVER | CLINTON |
| W HARRISON | GARFIELD | F D ROOSEVELT | G W BUSH |
| TYLER | ARTHUR | TRUMAN | OBAMA |
| POLK | CLEVELAND | EISENHOWER | |

Yesterday's Solution

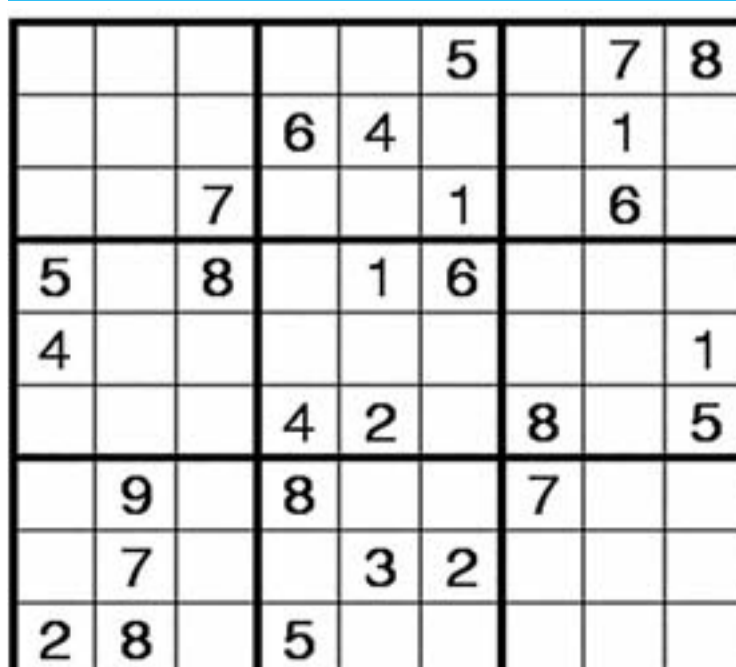
Types of Music 2



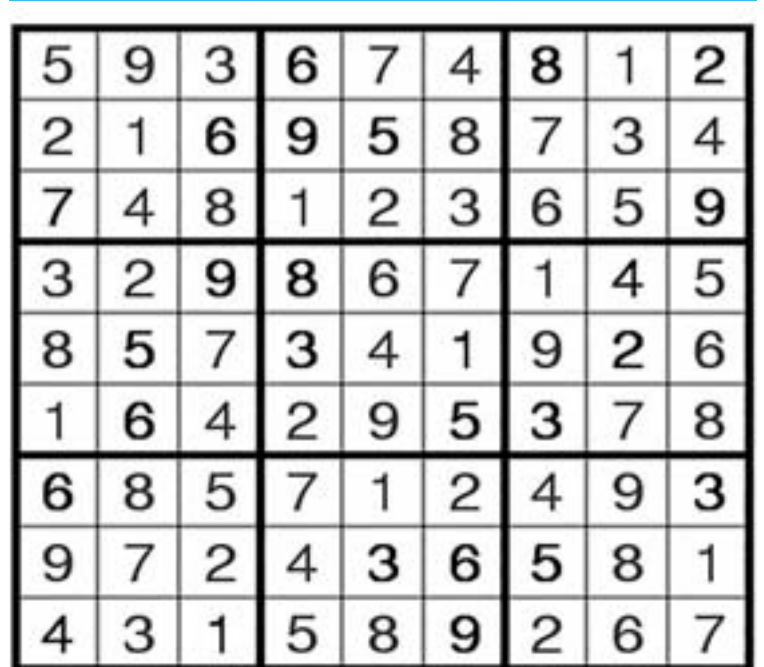
- | | | | |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| ACID JAZZ | CLASSICAL | GYPSY | REGGAE |
| AFRICAN | COUNTRY | IRISH | ROCK AND ROLL |
| ALTERNATIVE | DOO WOP | MAMBO | SALSA |
| BEBOP | ELEVATOR | MARIACHI | SURF |
| BLUES | EUROPOP | MIDDLE EASTERN | SWING |
| BOLLYWOOD | EXPERIMENTAL | NEW AGE | TECHNO |
| BOSSA NOVA | FOLK ROCK | NEW ORLEANS | TRIP HOP |
| BRAZILIAN | FUNK | OPERA | TROPICAL |
| CELTIC | GOSPEL | POP MUSIC | URBAN |
| CHAMBER | GRUNGE | PROGRESSIVE | ZYDECO |

The hidden message is: ALTERNATIVE ROCK

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Classifieds

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

Kuwait Times
 Now you can browse
www.kuwaittimes.net
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401

CHANGE OF NAME

I Natha Singh S/O Buta Singh R/O Kotli Ablu (Sri Muktsar Sahib) have changed my name to Natha Singh Brar. (C 5396) 24-4-2018

I, Durgam Anjana holder of Indian Passport No. M4636381 has changed my name to Durgam Ganganna.(C 5395) 23-4-2018

I, Shaikh Irfanahmed Mohammadyusuf, Passport No: J6971528, has changed my name to Bhura Irfanahmed Mohammadyusuf. (C 5393) 17-4-2018

ACCOMODATION

For Filipino ONLY Farwaniya block 1, near gulfmart. Available 25 of May, Contact 94418396 or 69972330 23-4-2018

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is **1889988**

EMERGENCY 112

For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL hotline 128

NOTICE
April 5, 2018

Mr. Arjit Bhagwan Dhurmale son of Mr. Bhagwan Shankar Dhurmale, Indian national, resident of 606, 11/B, Om Sai Ram CHS, Sahar Road, Andheri East, Mumbai, Pin: 400069, Maharashtra and Ms. Marhlie Flores Amores daughter of Mr. Edgasto Amores, Philippines national, resident of Block 69, Lot 6, Phase 7, Carissa Homes SUBD, BRIGY Panta 1, Tanza Cavite, Philippines, both presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice. Communications in this regard can be made by Email (attachecons@indembkw.org, welfaresection@indembkw.org) letters telephonic calls (00965-22550171, 00965-22533125).

(Sanjeev-Saklan) Attache (Consular) and Marriage Officer, Embassy of India, Kuwait. Ph:00965-22550171-00965-22533125 Fax: 00965-22573910 Email: attachecons@indembkw.org welfaresection@indembkw.org

NOTICE

In the Court of the hon'ble special judicial magistrate of first class for prohibition & excise offences Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh state, India. DVC No. 14/2018

Petitioner
Shaikh Farhat Anjum, W/o Shaikh Altaf Muslim, aged 23 years, housewife Presently staying at D No. 17/412 Sathu Chenganna Street, Kadapa city

Respondent No. 1
Shaikh Altaf, S/o Shaikh Shamsuddin Muslim, aged 38 years, Resident of D No. 10/937, Jangam Erukappa Street, Kadapa city W/as Secretary to GM of Ministry of Interior, Government of Kuwait, Area 7, Al-Farwaniya, PO Box No 441, North Khaitan 81015, Kuwait

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT NO. 1

The Domestic Violence Case filed by the petitioner against you and your family members, under "Domestic Violence Act 2005", stands posted on 27-4-2018 for your appearance. Hence you have to attend before the Hon'ble Court on 27-04-2018 at 10:30 a.m. either in person or through an Advocate lest, the matter will be decided in your exparte.

BY ORDER OF THE HON'BLE COURT
AJAY KUMAR VEENA
ADVOCATE FOR
PETITIONER

URGENTLY REQUIRED (For A Leading Automotive Group)

FLEET SALES SUPERVISOR

- Manage and Supervise Fleet Sales Strategy to Achieve Targets.
- Report, Manage, Supervise.
- Fleet Customer and Territory Management.
- Pro-active Lead Management to Maintain Healthy Pipeline for all Brands.

FLEET SALES CONSULTANT

- Good Product and Presentation Skills.
- Schedule Visits by AREA / by SEGMENT / by CUSTOMER .
- Utilize Marketing Tools - Brand Folder/ Product Information / Testimonials / PR.
- Rolling Weekly Plan to Visit top Customers.
- Optimize Follow up Strategy to Win Business.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Minimum 3-5 Years' Related Local Dealership Experience.
- Transferable Visa #18.
- Available to Join Immediately.

Interested Candidates are Requested to e mail their CVs ASAP to: recruitmentchoice14@gmail.com

Attractive Salary, Benefits & Excellent Incentive Package will be Offered to Suitable Candidates

REQUIRED

A Kuwaiti family is looking for an experienced cook to work at their house.

Applicants who are interested can call after 5 pm at 97296669

FOR RENT

A full floor in Salwa Block 5 very close to the Supermarket

- 5 bedrooms
- 2 of them are masters
- 1 maid's bedroom
- 5 Bathrooms
- Kitchen
- Living room
- Elevator
- Public swimming pool

For further inquiries, please call in Phone No: 55136363



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 24/4/2018				Departure Flights on Tuesday 24/4/2018			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:15	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
DLH	625	Dammam	00:50	JZR	560	Sohag	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	01:00	FDB	073	Dubai	00:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	WAN	541	KTM	01:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:35	KAC	417	Manila	01:45
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	THY	773	Istanbul	01:45
KLM	446	Bahrain	01:45	DLH	625	Frankfurt	01:50
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	285	Dhaka	01:50
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	JZR	528	Asyut	01:50
JZR	267	Beirut	02:05	KAC	677	Dubai	02:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	THY	765	Istanbul	02:50
QTR	1086	Doha	02:30	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
KAC	414	Bangkok	02:40	KKK	1269	Istanbul	02:55
JZR	553	Alexandria	02:50	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
JZR	607	Kochi	02:55	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:10
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05	UAE	854	Dubai	03:30
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	JZR	142	Doha	03:45
KAC	418	Manila	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
KAC	382	Delhi	03:10	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	QTR	1087	Doha	04:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
LMU	5510	Cairo	04:00	LMU	5511	Cairo	05:00
JAI	572	Mumbai	04:00	JAI	571	Mumbai	05:05
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	QTR	1077	Doha	05:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	04:25	KAC	303	Mumbai	05:35
JZR	609	Hyderabad	04:30	FDB	070	Dubai	06:00
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:30	JZR	750	Madinah	06:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	04:50	THY	771	Istanbul	06:30
PAL	668	Manila	05:00	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
FDB	069	Dubai	05:05	RJA	643	Amman	07:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	KAC	167	Paris	07:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	413	Bangkok	07:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	PAL	669	Manila	07:40
KAC	362	Colombo	06:00	JZR	171	Frankfurt	07:50
BAW	157	London	06:10	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
WAN	338	Alexandria	06:25	JZR	778	Jeddah	08:00
THY	6376	Istanbul	06:30	BAW	156	London	08:20
KAC	204	Lahore	06:30	KAC	165	Rome	08:25
JZR	561	Sohag	06:40	WAN	133	Bahrain	08:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:45	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	08:35
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:00	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
JZR	143	Doha	07:20	KAC	613	Bahrain	09:00
KAC	358	Kochi	07:40	JZR	324	Al Najaf	09:00
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:45	KAC	117	New York	09:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:05
JZR	605	Ahmedabad	08:05	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
KAC	384	Delhi	08:05	WAN	133	Doha	09:30
JZR	529	Asyut	08:15	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
WAN	352	Luxor	08:30	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	JZR	535	Cairo	09:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	JZR	482	Istanbul	09:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	101	London	10:00
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
SYR	341	Damascus	10:00	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	617	Doha	10:10
WAN	312	Asyut	10:20	QTR	1071	Istanbul	10:25
ETD	995	Abu Dhabi/Bahrain	10:20	IRA	674	Lar	10:40
JZR	751	Madinah	10:30	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	613	Bahrain	11:00
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	JZR	324	Al Najaf	11:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:00	KAC	117	New York	11:00
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:10	JZR	787	Jeddah	11:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:45	SYR	342	Damascus	11:00
JZR	325	Al Najaf	12:20	WAN	873	Istanbul	11:20
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:20	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
MSC	411	Asyut	12:30	MEA	405	Beirut	11:55
SAW	701	Damascus	12:30	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	QTR	1075	Doha	12:10
THY	766	Istanbul	12:45	ETD	996	Bahrain/SGN	12:20
WAN	542	KTM	12:50	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	SAW	702	Damascus	13:30
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00				
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:10				

Lifestyle | Music & Movies



British composer Harry Christophers conducts the Sir James MacMillan's Stabat Mater by British choir, in a concert live streamed for the first time from the Sistine Chapel. — AFP photos

VATICAN'S SISTINE CHAPEL HOSTS FIRST LIVE ONLINE CONCERT



The British choir perform the Sir James MacMillan's Stabat Mater conducted by British composer Harry Christophers.

The Vatican's Sistine Chapel, an artistic Renaissance jewel, opened up to the digital age on Sunday with the first live concert streamed over the internet from the famous sacred space. It was a performance of Scottish composer James MacMillan's acclaimed version of the "Stabat Mater." A British choir group The Sixteen and chamber orchestra ensemble Britten Sinfonia took to the stage against the backdrop of Michelangelo's masterpiece of The Last Judgment, while lovers of classical music from around the world tuned in to watch on the web.

The "Stabat Mater" is a 13th century poem most likely written by Franciscan friar Jacopone da Todi (1230-1306), but sometimes ascribed to Pope Innocent III, which portrays the Virgin Mary's suffering during Jesus Christ's death by crucifixion. MacMillan, 58, who has composed many pieces of sacred music, was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation, which has been working since 2001 to support young artistic talent and develop the link between art and faith. His version of "Stabat Mater" was heaped with praise upon its premiere at London's Barbican Centre in 2016, and Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of

Westminster, pushed for the composer to present his work at the Vatican.

Some 300 people filled the Sistine Chapel Sunday evening for the concert while live video of the performance was streamed over the website of Classic FM. As the British choir began to sing the audience there and online was reminded that the acoustics as much as the frescoes have made the chapel world famous over the centuries. The Sistine Chapel attracts some six million visitors each year as part of the Vatican Museum, but it is also "a musical center where composers have written for the liturgy for hundreds of years, some of the great composers of Western civilization, Palestrina, Allegri, Josquin... And to have my music played here is a very special privilege," said MacMillan.

Conductor Harry Christophers added that "these great sacred places always have something special about the acoustics. The details we can hear, the resonance, is fantastic; it's so emotional." And for him the performance at the Sistine Chapel was the chance of a lifetime. "These occasions, you are lucky if they appear once in a lifetime, and here we are, I can't think of anything greater." — AFP



The score for the double bass of the Sir James MacMillan's Stabat Mater is pictured.

US MASS SHOOTING SURVIVORS PAY IT FORWARD WITH TWO SHORT FILMS

Tim McGrath emerged from the 2012 movie theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado, physically unscathed, but his heart breaks whenever another person with a gun makes headlines in the United States. New York filmmaker Kim Snyder's work has allowed her to be privy to what she calls a "terrible club that no-one wants to be a member of" that is made up of communities traumatized by gun violence in schools, workplaces, churches or places of leisure. Two short films shown at New York's Tribeca film festival last week - "Surviving Theater 9" and "Notes from Dunblane":

Lessons From a School Shooting" - look at the emotional and mental toll of gun violence in hopes of helping both current survivors, and those yet to come. "Every time a shooting comes, my heart just breaks for the people who are about to live through what we have all lived through, and knowing that it will forever change their lives," said McGrath, who wrote and directed "Surviving Theater 9." According to the Gun Violence Archive, a nonprofit that tracks gun-related deaths based on official records, there were 346 mass shootings - defined as four or more people shot in one incident - in America in 2017.

McGrath's 40-minute film recounts his own struggles and those of two other people after the 2012 shooting that killed 12 people and injured 70 in Colorado

during a midnight screening of "The Dark Knight Rises." All the experiences are true, ranging from flashbacks, crass comments, guilt and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as well as coping mechanisms learned at the Aurora Resilience Center. "I thought that by showing our stories and honoring the survivors that I went through the healing process with, we could help some other folks," said McGrath.

McGrath wasn't among those shot but he nevertheless had a hard time for years afterward and said he made the film because he couldn't find anything like it. "I was going to therapists and reading tomes about psychology and PTSD and ways to get through it. But I was craving something I could just sit down and watch," he said. Snyder's 22-minute film also focuses on healing rather than the shooters or the polarizing issues of gun control.

"Notes from Dunblane" looks at the relationship between two Catholic priests in Newtown, Connecticut, and Dunblane, Scotland, over eerily similar shootings in elementary schools in both small towns in 2012 and 1996 respectively. Newtown's Father Bob Weiss and Dunblane's Father Basil O'Sullivan began writing to each other after the Newtown school shooting, sharing their struggles to explain and comfort the families of the children shot dead, many whom they also buried. — Reuters

Philip Glass oratorio casts spotlight on Indian guru

Philip Glass, often considered the foremost living US composer, has credited India with helping form his musical vision. When trying in turn to understand what made modern India, Glass looks to 19th-century mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa. "The Passion of Ramakrishna," an oratorio by Glass on the final days of the revered guru, found a new audience with its New York debut Saturday night at Carnegie Hall, closing a season of concerts to mark the composer's 80th birthday.

The Pacific Symphony, which premiered "The Passion of Ramakrishna" in 2006 at its home in southern California's Orange County, brought the work to New York in the Carnegie Hall debut for the 39-year-old orchestra that has emphasized original choral works. Sung by the 100-strong Pacific Chorale, "The Passion of Ramakrishna" is, musically at least, a disarmingly straightforward work for Glass, with triumphant brass and a tender epilogue that hark back to an earlier era of Western composers.

Ramakrishna, from the eastern region of Bengal, was consumed by spiritual visions from a young age and, as his followers grew, became a critical force in shaping modern Hinduism. He notably declared that "all religions are true"-a powerful statement for equality in the diverse subcontinent-and worshipped a "divine mother" as creator of the world. Glass, in brief comments to



Philip Glass (left), seen here with Barack Obama in 2016, has credited India with helping form his musical vision. — AFP

introduce "The Passion of Ramakrishna" at Carnegie Hall, credited Ramakrishna with instilling a sense of Indian identity at a time when British colonialism had spread feelings of cultural inferiority.

"It is hard to imagine the emergence of India on the world stage without the spark that was provided by Ramakrishna's brilliance," Glass wrote in notes to a recorded version of "The Passion of Ramakrishna."

More than 100 voices as Ramakrishna

The years after Ramakrishna's death saw a flowering in Indian culture led by figures influenced by him. His disciple Swami Vivekananda

director of the Pacific Symphony, said he and Glass had wanted to reflect Ramakrishna's state of enlightenment as he lay dying. "We almost at the same time came to the idea that the voice of Ramakrishna should actually be the chorus, because at that stage in one's relationship with God, gender evaporates," St.Clair told AFP.

Long influence of Shankar

Glass had a formative experience in 1960s Paris when he met sitar legend Ravi Shankar, who lifted the instrument to the world stage. Glass set about transcribing Shankar into notation that could be followed by Western musicians. The Pacific Symphony opened at Carnegie Hall with "Meetings Along the Edge," from the 1990 joint album by Glass and Shankar, in which the American's trademark arpeggios play with ragas adapted to strings. The late maestro's daughter Anoushka Shankar joined the concert to perform her father's Sitar Concerto No. 3, a call-and-response between the sitar and Western ensemble which Ravi Shankar had taught her only through singing the ragas.

As for "The Passion of Ramakrishna," St.Clair said he was initially struck by the influence not of Shankar, but of the late Austrian Romantic Anton Bruckner. When he presented his theory to Glass, St.Clair said the composer was taken aback-he had indeed composed most of the oratorio while in Bruckner's home city of Linz. —AFP

Anti-Semitic Wagner letter up for sale in Jerusalem

A letter penned by Richard Wagner warning of Jewish influence in culture will be auctioned next week in Israel, where public performances of German anti-Semitic composer's works are effectively banned. Wagner, whose grandiose and nationalistic 19th century work is infused with anti-Semitism, misogyny and proto-Nazi ideas of racial purity, was Adolf Hitler's favorite composer. While there is no law in Israel banning his works from being played in Israel, orchestras and venues refrain from doing so because of the public outcry and disturbances accompanying past attempts.

Tuesday's sale of the handwritten letter, dated April 25, 1869 and addressed to French philosopher Edouard Schure, could rekindle the debate in Israel on the controversial composer. Wagner wrote in the letter that Jewish assimilation into French society prevents the observation of "the corroding influence of the Jewish spirit on modern culture", adding that the French know "very little" about the Jews. In 1850, Wagner published under a pseudonym his infamous anti-Semitic pamphlet, "Judaism in Music", in which he lambasted Jews. It was re-issued in 1869 under his full name.



A letter by German anti-Semitic composer Richard Wagner is displayed at the Kedem auction house in Jerusalem.

Meron Eren, a co-founder and owner of the Kedem auction house which will be selling the letter on Tuesday, said this was the first time he was dealing with a Wagner item. "Wagner would roll over in his grave" if he knew that a bearded Jew in Jerusalem was going to profit from his letter, Eren said. Ruth HaCohen, a musicology professor at Hebrew University, said the letter shows



Meron Eren, co-founder and owner of the Kedem auction house, holds a letter by German anti-Semitic composer Richard Wagner in Jerusalem.

Wagner's desire to have his anti-Semitic views accepted by the public, describing its sale in Jerusalem of all places an "irony". But there are those in Israel who are trying to break the taboo surrounding Wagner and promote his music, like Jonathan Livny, an attorney and head of the Israel Wagner Society. He said although Israelis embrace German products like Volkswagen and Mercedes cars and Israeli trains and submarines are made in Germany, they continue to boycott Wagner. "It's easy to boycott him because most of the people don't listen to his music," said Livny. Wagner has become a "symbol of the Holocaust", Livny added. — AFP

Lady Gaga urged Cooper to sing live in A Star Is Born

Lady Gaga convinced Bradley Cooper to sing live in 'A Star Is Born'. The 32-year-old star appears alongside Bradley, 43, in the upcoming romantic-drama film, and Bradley - who directed the project - has revealed she implored him to sing live in the movie in exchange for help with her acting. He said: "[Gaga] said right from the beginning that there would be a barter.

"[She said] 'I'm gonna rely on you to get a performance that's honest out of me' - because she'd never done a film before - and I'm gonna make sure that you're going to turn into a musician.

Because we're going to sing everything live.' And I went, 'Wait, what?'" Although Bradley spent a long time preparing to sing, he still found it to be a "terrifying" experience. He



Bradley Cooper

shared: "[Singing live] was terrifying, and I really relied on her. I spent about a year and a half taking vocal lessons and preparing." The Hollywood star actually spent three years preparing for the 42-day shoot.

The movie is a remake of the 1937 film of the same name, and Bradley revealed he was determined to helm the project, regardless of whether it was a success or not. Bradley told Vulture: "The broken love story in 'A Star Is Born' kept haunting me. 'Shots kept coming into my head. I would dream about it. I realized I had to [direct it], whether it fails or not. I knew I had to try and I wound up absolutely loving it. 'You can't hide when you sing. The best way to express love is through singing and music. I knew if I could marry that in a way, it would be special."

Avengers: Infinity War sequel 'could be a three-hour film'

The sequel to 'Avengers: Infinity War' could "easily be a three-hour film".

The directing duo of Anthony and Joe Russo have given fans an insight into what they can expect from the fourth 'Avengers' movie, revealing it's set to be the longest film in the history of the franchise. Joe said: "It's pretty long. I'm not sure we should say how long it is because people tend to get really excited... 'It's our longest rough cut of any of the four movies.'" Joe subsequently confessed that the movie could stretch beyond the three-hour mark. Despite this, he promised that he and his brother will be "very hard on the material", meaning they won't keep any scenes in the film that aren't necessary.

He told Collider: "It could easily be a three-hour film. We're very hard on the material, we like it to play at a certain pace. I think it will be longer than 'Avengers 3.'" Last week, meanwhile, it was revealed that the Russo brothers gave Tom Holland a "really fake script" to stop him revealing the

secrets of 'Avengers: Infinity War'. The directors have gone to great lengths to keep details of their latest effort under wraps, including giving the Spider-Man actor - who finds it hard to remain tight-lipped - a fake script. — Bang Showbiz



Anthony Russo and Joe Russo

Bruno Mars secured Chic album collab through Anderson .Paak

Bruno Mars landed a feature on Chic's long-awaited LP 'It's About Time' through his support act Anderson .Paak. The 'Finesse' hitmaker was supported by the 32-year-old rapper on his '24K Magic Tour' in the UK last year, and as soon as Bruno found out Anderson was working with the band's frontman Nile Rodgers at the iconic Abbey Road Studios in London around the same time, he wanted in. In an interview with Pitchfork Radio, Rodgers recalled: "Anderson .Paak and I - we had a few days, and he was opening for [Bruno Mars] while he was in the UK. 'And Bruno was like, 'Damn, I gotta stop by and hang with y'all.' 'So we sat around telling great Prince stories and finally we got down, and Bruno came up with an idea and said, 'Damn, I wonder why nobody's done this.' So we decided to get down and do it."

The 'Le Freak' hitmaker also revealed that he is heading into the studio with Haim - sisters Este, Danielle and Alana Haim - to record a track for the record and teased that they could make special appearances at one another's gigs in the future. He said: "For the next two years, whenever you see Haim doing a live show and you see Chic doing a live show ... just see if either of the two bands winds up playing with the other one. 'Even unannounced. Because on the red carpet the other day, we challenged each other to a battle of the bands. 'And I love Haim. They said, 'We will kick any band's ass! I said, 'I will happily take the challenge.'" The double album is also set to feature the likes of Craig David, Stefflon Don, Mura Masa, and Blondie's Debbie Harry.

Chic's first record since 1992's 'Chic-ism' was partly delayed due to the deaths of Rodgers' famous musician pals, Prince, David Bowie, George Michael and Chris Cornell. Rodgers - who was diagnosed with prostate cancer six years ago but was given the all-clear in 2014 - underwent surgery for cancer on his right kidney last year, which added to the delay. The 65-year-old disco legend previously revealed 'It's About Time' will be released in two parts, so fans will have to listen to both sides to get the full picture. — Bang Showbiz



Bruno Mars

Lifestyle | Features



South Africa? Pop Mohamed and his group perform at the Al Yarmouk Theater on Sunday.



South African Ambassador M P Bona (second left) poses for a group photo with Pop Mohamed (center left) and other top dignitaries after the event on Sunday. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

A UNIQUE MUSICAL BLEND OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

South Africa's Pop rocks

By Chidi Emmanuel

In an ambience of melodious tones, South Africa's Pop Mohamed and his group enthralled the audience as they unleashed their instrumentals in their unique form of music at the Al-Yarmouk Theater on Sunday. The event was organized by the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa in partnership with Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah.



Pop Mohamed playing one the musical instruments.

Born in Benoni east of Johannesburg in South Africa, Pop Mohamed is said by many to be South Africa's 'unofficial minister of music'. In the 1990s, he began recording the 'Music of the San' from the Kalahari in Namibia and integrating it into various projects ranging from jazz and funk to drum 'n' bass and trance. Pop Mohamed works as a producer/performer and lives in Johannesburg.

He loves experimenting with the newest technology, always in the service of music. Pop owes his artistic openness to his childhood to the Indian in Benoni. His nickname Pop dates back to his childhood enthusiasm for the comic seaman Popeye. At the age of 14, he founded his own first band 'The Les Valiants', with whom he played kwela, soul, pop and Latin music. With his band 'Children's Society' (early 70s) he then recorded his first hit in the townships: 'I'm a married Man'. In the 80s Pop worked more backstage as a producer and sound-engineer, while also learning to play the mbira and other African indigenous instruments.

In 1991 and 1992 he produced for the South African market the solo albums Kalamazoo, and Sophiatown Society, both nominated for the Best Jazz Album Award. In 1995 he issued his international debut album 'Ancestral Healing', recorded in New York with New York musicians like the native American vibraphonist and percussionist Valerie Naranjo and Emma and also with musicians from South Africa. Pop himself played the piano, the Kora, the mbira and various percussion instruments. This album won the 3rd annual FNB SAMA Award for Best Traditional Performance. Before turning to tra-

ditional sounds, he played the keyboards and guitar with eminent jazz musicians live and in the studio. The end of apartheid was for many of his colleagues a personal relief and a professional setback, since the public then rushed to hear pop-stars streaming in from abroad instead of their own musicians. Pop Mohamed countered it by launching himself on an international career which has since led to many tours.

At the same time he took more interest in traditional music from all over the world. Fearing that it would vanish in the wake of techno, he wished to have it not only recorded but also suffused with modern sounds and rhythms to appeal to a wider audience. As he put it: 'If people don't understand where they come from, there is a hole in their soul.'

Pop & Friends

Pop has his own personal band simply called 'Pop Mohamed & Friends'. This band has been together for 10 years. They have travelled in and out of South Africa - making a name for themselves wherever they go. His vision with the band is to concentrate on a future South African sound which no-one has ever heard before, while also protecting and preserving African indigenous musical instruments for the 21st century. Pop Mohamed & Friends are a five piece outfit featuring: Pop Mohamed on African indigenous instruments, vocals and keyboards; Femi Koya on all saxophones and flute; Maxwell Baloyi on keyboards and acoustic piano; Gally Ngoveni on bass and vocals and Bernice Boikanyo on drums.

His other baby project as a quartet is called



Pop Mohamed playing one the musical instruments.

'The Millennium Experience'. Apart from composing music for his CDs etc, Pop scored the music for a movie 'The Whale Caller' which was filmed in Hermanus. 'The Whale Caller' won an award for best African movie at the Johannesburg Film Festival. With the spearhead of the underground sounds of the 21st century, Pop still loves to blend and experiment traditional

music with electronic instruments for the dance floor and other spiritual platforms. One looks forward to this unusual musician's new projects! Some of the countries Pop toured spread his message and still continue to do so are; US, UK, all the Scandinavian countries, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Germany, Switzerland, Nepal, Vietnam and now Kuwait.



Afghan female laborer Sitara Wafadar, 18, who dresses as a male in order to support her family, working at a brick factory in Sultanpur village in Surkh Rod district, in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province. (Center) Sitara Wafadar who dresses as a male in order to support her family, playing with a ball at her home. (Right) Sitara Wafadar working at a brick factory in Sultanpur village. — AFP photos



Afghan girl spends life disguised as 'son' her parents wanted

Sitara Wafadar yearns for long hair like other girls. Instead, the Afghan teenager has disguised herself as a boy for more than a decade, forced by her parents to be the "son" they never had. With five sisters and no brothers, Sitara lives by the gender-twisting custom known as "bacha poshi", which in Dari

refers to a girl "dressed as a boy", enabling her to safely perform the duties of a son in the patriarchal country. The 18-year-old, who resides with her impoverished family in a mud-brick house in a village in Afghanistan's eastern province of Nangarhar, has pretended to be a boy for most of her life.

Every morning she puts on the baggy shirt and trousers and flip flops typically worn by Afghan males. Sometimes she covers her short brown hair with a scarf and deepens her voice to conceal her real gender. "I never think that I am a girl," Sitara tells AFP at the brick factory where she and her elderly father work six days a week as bonded laborers to repay money they borrowed from the owner and feed the family. "My father always says 'Sitara is like my eldest son'. Sometimes... I attend funerals as his eldest son"-something she would never be allowed to do as a girl.

Bacha poshi has a long history in deeply conservative Afghanistan, where boys are valued more highly than girls and women are often confined to the home. Normally it is families with no male heirs who make a daughter dress as a boy so she can carry out the duties of a son without getting harassed, or worse. But some girls choose to pose as boys so they can enjoy the freedom their male counterparts take for granted in a country that treats women as second-class citizens. While most bacha posh, as they are known, stop dressing as a boy after reaching puberty, Sitara says she keeps wearing male clothing "to protect myself" at the brick kiln. "When I go to work most people do not realize that I am a girl," Sitara says. "If they realized that an 18-year-old



Sitara Wafadar working at a brick factory in Sultanpur village.

girl was working morning to evening in a brick factory then I would encounter many problems. I could even be kidnapped."

No choice

Sitara started working at the factory when she was eight, following in the footsteps of her four older sisters, who also made bricks instead of going to school-until they married, after which they stayed home. She makes 500 bricks a day in return for 160 Afghanis (just over \$2). From 7:00 am to 5:00 pm she crouches on the ground preparing mud and clay and then pushing it into brick molds under the hot sun that

daughter's life would be peaceful and prosperous," Noor tells AFP. "All the responsibility is on my and Sitara's shoulders-we have to provide for the family and pay back the loans."

'I wish I had a brother'

Bacha poshi tends to be followed in "particularly conservative areas" of Afghanistan, Kabul University sociology professor Baryalai Fetrat tells AFP. But after years of dressing as a boy, the girls can be left feeling confused about their gender identity and status in the male-dominated society. "Girls find it difficult to go back to their normal self or act as a submissive wife to their husbands, which can lead to depression and also domestic violence," Fetrat says. Sitara's mother, Fatima, wishes Sitara could wear female clothes and stay at home, but she needs her to "bring groceries, take me to the doctor and do other work because my husband is old".

While Sitara recognizes that her situation is "unfair and unjust", she is resigned to it, mainly because her younger sister, who is 13, would "face the same fate as me" if she stopped. "I will do the hard work because I don't want my younger sister dressing as a boy and working at the factory," Sitara says.

"If I don't work we will face a lot of hardship and problems." But even after so many years acting as a boy, Sitara still finds herself imagining what it would be like if she had a brother and could be free to have long hair and go to school. "When I put on boy's clothes I wish I had a brother, then my dreams would have been fulfilled," she says. — AFP

"I never think that I am a girl"



Sitara Wafadar collecting water near her home in Sultanpur village.



Models presenting creations by Ivan Gunawan.



A model presenting a creation by Rasya Shakira.



Models presenting creations by Lisa Fitria.



These pictures show models presenting creations by Sad Indah on the final day of the Muslim Fashion Festival in Jakarta. — AFP photos

Muslim Fashion Festival



Indonesian models presenting creations by Ray Anjas Maulana.



Models presenting creations by Eugenefectes.

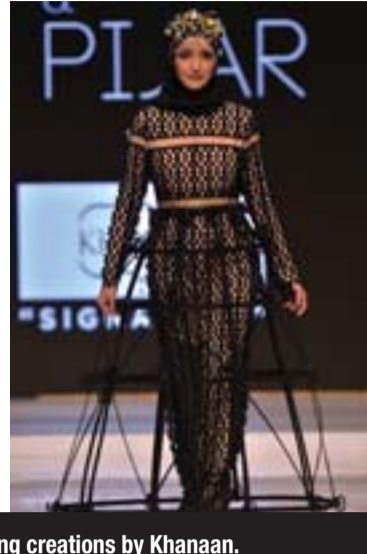


Models presenting creations by Novia Sukijo.



Models presenting creations by Yuko.

Lifestyle | Fashion



Models presenting creations by Khanaan.



Indonesian models presenting creations by Intan Maulina.



Indonesian models presenting creations by designer Hannie Hananto.



Models presenting creations by Irna Mutiara (front row) on the second day of the Muslim Fashion Festival in Jakarta.



Indonesian models presenting creations by Sherly Az Zahra.



Indonesian models presenting creations by designer Wiwin F. Kosasih.



Indonesian models presenting creations by designer Lydia Marissa.

The Symphony Style Hotel to host Kuwait Times' students' art competition

By Ben Garcia

The Symphony Style Hotel - committed to a clean and green environment - will host the awards night of Kuwait Times' students' art competition. Students and parents who will be attending the awards night will be treated to the best of the hotel's hospitality. Peter Schuler, Symphony General Manager, said the company believes in giving back to the community. "We like the concept and idea of the clean and green painting competition. We believe that as a hospitality industry member,

we want you to know that we are responsible business owners. We think of people, we think of community and we think of the planet we live in. Small changes start always with small actions. This is a great opportunity to showcase the best of our hotel's hospitality, services and products," he said.

According to Schuler, the hotel promotes and offers a green, clean and safe environment. "We are a 'GreenKey' certified hotel," he said. "In the hotel itself, our visitors can enjoy an indoor garden with food and coffee. The place is very serene and relaxing," he said.

Symphony Hotel is proud of its various Responsible Business initiatives. "For RB alone, we have a dedicated team of 15 employees to carry out the plans and programs in various areas. We organize beach cleanup activities, tree planting and switching off electricity during the annual Earth Hour. We also have green patrols to save water and energy consumption. We distribute sprout pencils in guest suites to encourage people to patronize a greener environment. We also replaced the straws in the hotel with paper straws during April in celebration of the Earth Day 2018.



Peter Schuler, General Manager of Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait.

The hotel enjoys a 77-80 percent occupancy rate and is fortunate to be located in the best spot in Kuwait. "Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait is designed to reflect a distinctive character of local culture and this is what makes us unique in our offerings," he said. On expansion plans, the general manager said the hotel wants to focus more on development to stay ahead of its competitors. "We have various strengths - the hotel is unique. We are proud to say that Symphony Hotel is located in one of the best locations that a hotel in Kuwait can have. All the rooms of Symphony Hotel enjoy a sea view, which is unique to us only," Schuler said.



"We are enhancing our services and have upgraded most of our products and services to make every moment matter and leave an exceptional impact on our guests - this is our aim and objective. We lately introduced a special birthday party room for kids and a dedicated teen hub, in addition to our newly conceptualized 'Chococafe Garden', which is a new indoor cafe that offers a tempting menu of snacks in a green and flowery garden all year around," he added.

Peter Schuler was appointed in 2015 as the General Manager of the iconic Symphony Style Hotel Kuwait and brought with him 20+ years of rich hospitality experience he gained working in nine different countries, mostly from the luxury Radisson family. Schuler brings to this landmark long and extensive operational and administrative hospitality skills obtained throughout his professional career years.



Lifestyle

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018



This picture shows models presenting creations by Eksanti (center) on the final day of the Muslim Fashion Festival in Jakarta. The Muslim Fashion Festival was held from April 19 to 22. — AFP photos

A Syrian dancer's journey from hell to the Paris stage



Syrian dancer and choreographer Yara Al-Hasbani rehearses her dance show "Unstoppable".



Syrian dancer and choreographer Yara Al-Hasbani poses during a rehearsal of her dance show "Unstoppable".

Yara Al-Hasbani was putting the finishing touches to her make-up for a performance of "Romeo and Juliet" in Damascus when she found out her father had been tortured to death. It was the moment the dancer's world turned upside down. "The little girl in me died at that moment," says the 24-year-old, who had protested alongside her family against Syria's regime in 2011 at the start of the brutal civil war. Six years on, Hasbani may be living a new life in Paris, but her feelings on the war at home spill onto the stage through her poignant contemporary choreography.

“**THE LITTLE GIRL IN ME DIED AT THAT MOMENT**”

Her first Parisian performances, in the public squares at République and Trocadero, right by the Eiffel Tower, were tributes to the hundreds of Syrian children killed in a chemical weapons attack in 2013. "I took inspiration from the photos," Hasbani says. "I imitated the positions of the children's curled-up bodies." She is just kicking off performances of "Unstoppable," a 12-minute solo retracing her journey to exile, at a dance festival organized by the Arab World Institute in Paris, running until June 23.

Leaps into a new life

Hasbani, who sports a bleach-blond pixie haircut and a nose piercing, has slowly rebuilt her life through dance after it fell apart with her father's death. His body was returned to the family 23 days after he was arrested by Syrian authorities. They claimed he had died of a heart attack. When she began receiving threats herself, she knew she couldn't stay in Damascus. "Don't you know who's talking to you? Watch yourself," said a voice over the phone.

Hasbani, her mother and two siblings came to France three years ago after they were granted refugee visas in Europe. In Rochefort, a scenic port town in the southwest, she finally started classes again after breaking off the professional dance training she had begun in Damascus. She was happy to use anywhere as a stage. "In Rochefort I'd dance in the parks," she smiles.



Syrian dancer and choreographer Yara Al-Hasbani rehearses her dance show "Unstoppable".



Syrian dancer and choreographer Yara Al-Hasbani rehearses her dance show "Unstoppable" for the Arab Dance Festival on April 16, 2018 on the 9th floor of the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA) in Paris. — AFP photos